Thursday, February 23, 2012 ★★ 5 sections / Vol. 27 / No. 77 P18 | Mobile Alert: Text INQ (SPACE) to 4467 | www.inquirer.net Twitter: @inquirerdotnet

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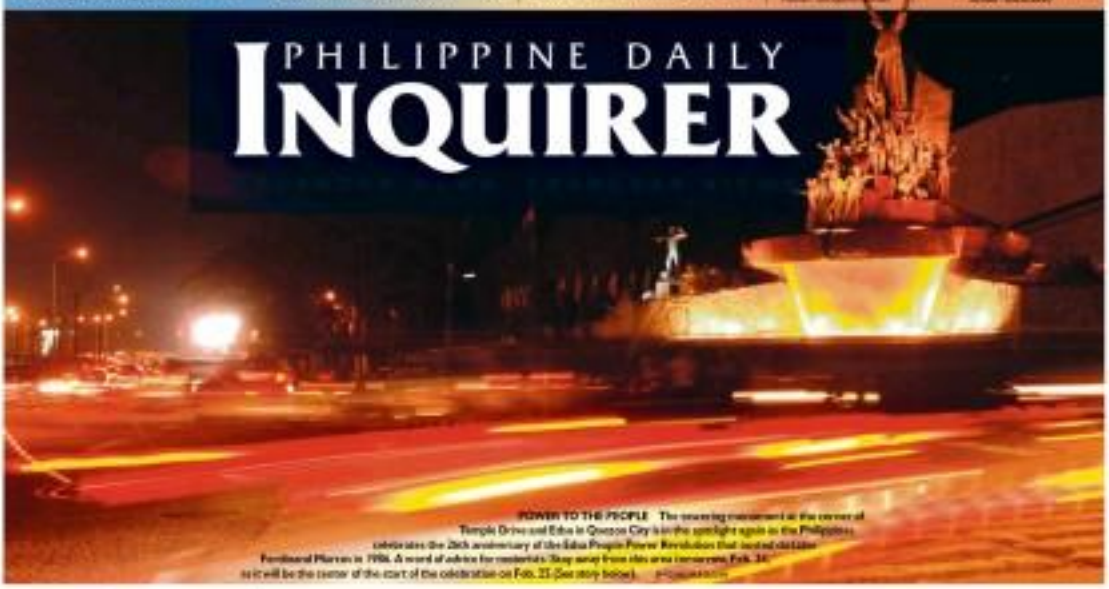

POWER TO THE PEOPLE The towering monument at the corner of Temple Drive and Edsa in Quezon City is in the spotlight again as the Philippines celebrates the 26th anniversary of the Edsa People Power Revolution that ousted dictator Ferdinand Marcos in 1986. A word of advice for motorists: Stay away from this area tomorrow, Feb. 24, as it will be the center of the start of the celebration on Feb. 25 (See story below). PHOTOGRAPHER

US suit tags Pagcor execs

Naguiat, Genuino deny wrongdoing

WITNESS FOR THE PROSECUTION Justice Secretary Leila de Lima (l) the Supreme Court extended to give a comment from us on Nov. 18 and set oral arguments on Nov. 22, why issue a TRO on Nov. 15? ANSWERS

By Dexter L. Lovan

THE CHAIR of state-owned Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor) yesterday denied allegations made by an owner of US-based casino giant Wynn Resorts that he had received undue perks and favors from a Japanese businessman.

Cristina Naguiat Jr., also the Pagcor CEO, said his name was being dragged into a boardroom fray between two gaming magnates.

Naguiat said he did not receive a private Chanel bag meant for his wife from pachinko tycoon Kazuo Okada during a visit to Macau in September 2010.

He acknowledged that he found a Chanel bag delivered to his room after his return from one of his business meetings, but said that he returned it promptly to his hosts.

Naguiat explained that he US SUIT/ A-17

Former Pagcor chair denies getting gifts from Okada / A17

'BOURNE' AGAIN President Aquino shakes hands with "Bourne Legacy" lead actor Jeremy Renner, during Wednesday's courtesy call of the "Bourne" cast and production staff in Malacañang. Note Renner wearing a barong with cargo pants. MALACAÑANG

'CJ wanted to help GMA escape'

By Christian V. Esguerra and TJ Burgonio

SHOULD Chief Justice Renato Corona be removed from office as consecutive with a "collegial" Supreme Court resolution allowing former President and now Pampanga Rep. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to seek medical treatment abroad last year?

A day after wallowing a significant defeat on the third impeachment article, prosecutors yesterday began arguing their case that Corona betrayed the public trust "through his partiality" in granting temporary restraining order (TRO) in favor of Arroyo.

Justice Secretary Leila de Lima took the witness stand and detailed the circumstances surrounding the issuance of the TRO on Nov. 15 last year and why she opted not to follow it and instead prevented the departure of Arroyo and her entourage that day.

"In my own appreciation of what happened, the developments, actions, what I read in the opinions, yes," De Lima said when questioned by the chief defense counsel, Serafin Cuevas, CJ PAINTED/ A2

Prosecutors drop 2 raps in Article 3 vs Corona

By Cathy C. Yamsuan

PROSECUTORS yesterday dropped two other charges against Chief Justice Renato Corona in the third article of the impeachment complaint a day after Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile rejected a witness called to testify that Corona enjoyed free plane tickets from Philippine Airlines (PAL) while it was pursuing a case in the Supreme Court.

The two charges involved Corona's alleged "excessive entanglement" with former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo following the appointment of PROSECUTORS/ A6

Lacson blames 'fast break' made for prosecutors' woes • **Senate to probe BSP on auditing accounts of PDP** / A6

'Celebrate Edsa I with gratitude'

By Jocelyn R. Uy and Norman Bordadora

CATHOLIC Church leaders have urged the people to mark the celebration of the 26th anniversary of the Edsa People Power Revolution on Saturday with gratitude to God for restoring freedom through "bloodless" means, but warned those using the event for personal motives and interests.

"Now, people can always use CELEBRATE/ A17

Ibuna lawyer: Aleli not Iggy's legal wife due to technicality

By Nancy C. Carvajal

ALELI Arroyo is not the legal wife of the late Negros Oriental Rep. Ignacio "Iggy" Arroyo whose body is scheduled to arrive on Friday evening from London, following an agreement between three parties claiming custody of the body, according to lawyer Leonard de Vera.

De Vera, Grace Bunsi's counsel, said the marriage of Aleli and Iggy was null and void due to a technicality.

"The annulment of the marriage of Iggy to [first wife] Marilyn Jacinto was valid, but the subsequent marriage was not IBUNA/ A4

Iggy's wake schedule / A10

Pacquiao swept up in Linsanity

By Nicola U. Reeds
Correspondent

LOS ANGELES—Like most people in the world, "Fighter of the Decade" Manny Pacquiao has been swept up in Linsanity.

"I'm so proud of Jeremy Lin," PACQUIAO/ A6

Pacquiao 'embarrassed' by Mayweather offer / A6

WORLD
Ex-IMF chief Strauss-Kahn held for sex ring probe / A23
More than 60 killed in Syria; Red Cross calls for ceasefires / A23

METRO
NBI deputy director links Ohara kidnap to his ambush / A21

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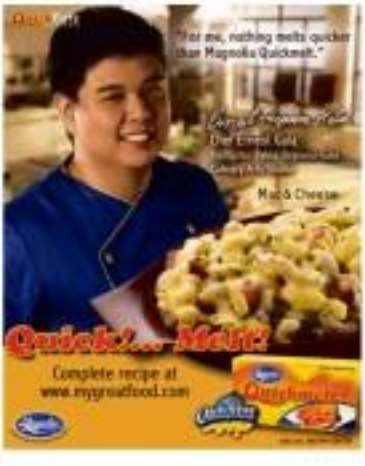
Chow time in HK / C2



WEATHER FORECAST

TODAY: Intense thunderstorms, Metro Manila, Visayas, and Mindanao will have mostly cloudy skies with scattered thunderstorms and flashfloods/landslides while the rest of the country will be mostly cloudy or partly cloudy with scattered thunderstorms or thundershowers.

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Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Mostly Cloudy
Puerto Princesa	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Mostly Cloudy
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De Lima vows hazing probe

By Jeremy Rosig

JUSTICE Secretary Leila de Lima has vowed an "honest to goodness" investigation into the death in Antipolo City of San Beda law student Marvin Reglos in suspected hazing rites of the Lambda Rho Beta—the allied fraternity of her own sorority.

De Lima revealed that she was a contender of Lambda Rho Sigma, the sister sorority of Lambda Rho Beta, and said she would appeal to her "bonds" to cooperate in the investigation. (See related story on Page A2.1)

"I will appeal to my bonds in the fraternity to cooperate fully with the investigators. I will ask the PNP and the National Bureau of Investigation to invite known officers of Lambda Rho, [including] the Camel Hizons, the head of the student body, to possibly shed light for further questioning," said De Lima, a graduate of the San Beda College of Law.

De Lima met yesterday with Reglos' father Lucito and sister Lovies, and approved their request for a reautopsy of Reglos' remains.

"The information they got is that the fraternity honors somewhere in Antipolo had conducted an autopsy, but until now they haven't gotten hold of anything. They also didn't see any medical records from the hospital where Marvin was brought. So to be sure, we have to conduct a reautopsy. The NBI will assign a medico-legal doctor to do it," De Lima told reporters.

De Lima also ordered the NBI to conduct a parallel probe of the killing, although she stressed that the Philippine National Police would remain the lead investigator in the case.

Reglos, a law student, was brought to the Doctors Medical Center in Antipolo on Sunday night where he was pronounced dead on arrival. Police suspect he died from injuries suffered during fraternity initiation rites. The Letran he wore bore the name "Lambda Rho Beta."

The Governor also ordered the NBI to verify information related by a cousin of Reglos, that two other students were seriously injured during the initiation and were hospitalized, one of them in critical condition.

John Does

"Even if there are already two suspected in custody, there are others John Does. We don't know how many participated, who they are and who are present, who directly inflicted physical harm. I'm really interested to know what happened, who are involved and who should be accountable. Ethically as a criminal act. We have the Anti-Hazing Law. Our instructions have been issued," she added.

Lucito thanked De Lima for her actions on his son's death. He said he allowed Reglos' remains to be brought to San Beda for public viewing for a few hours yesterday to serve a reminder to students about the dark side of fraternities.

Reglos' remains will later be taken to their native Isabela, Lucito said.

'Bourne' star leaves 'legacy' in Palace visit

By Christine D. Avendaño

HOLLYWOOD actor Jeremy Renner arrived in the Palace wearing a formal Barong Tagalog over green camouflage pants.

But Renner shrank Presidential Security Group members relaxed their strict dress code for Renner, who came along with the producers of the movie "Bourne Legacy" to pay a courtesy call on President Aquino.

At the President's Hall, Renner, producers Patrick Crowley and Dan Sullivan and Filipino producer Jun Halasan waived punctuality for President Aquino to appear as Weber reporters and photographers took pictures of the lead star with their cameras as well as camera phones.

The "Bourne" genre also exchanged pleasantries with Tourism Secretary Ramon Jimenez, Communications Secretary Ricky Carandang, Presidential Communications and Operations Office Secretary Herminio Coloma and Metro Manila Development Authority Chair Francis Tolentino, who all sat across them.

After a while, Renner turned to reporters directly behind him, saying "How are you guys doing?" Reporters roared: "Yes" and "Wow."

YouTube singer

A television reporter asked Renner about his singing skills, mentioning a YouTube video where he was shown belting some tunes.

He initially hesitated in answering, and then told her "not to believe" all that was circulating in YouTube.

Soon after that President Aquino made his appearance and immediately shook hands with his guests.

When the Chief Executive sat down, he eyed the reporters in the room and joked to his guests that the Palace press corps seemed to have "doubled" in size, eliciting laughter from the group.

The President's comments signaled the end of the media coverage and reporters were asked to leave the room.

Presidential spokesperson Edwin Lacierda said that it was the favorite producers who sought the meeting with the President so they could thank the government for its valuable assistance in making sure the [filming of their movie] happened."

"It's also good for us because it's up

Solons told: Go easy on 'sin' taxes

By Gil Cabacungan

A LAWMAKER yesterday said that Malacañang's move to reform "sin taxes" should not take a bad turn between the state's goals of increasing revenues and the local industry's ability to survive with higher rates.

During a hearing of the House ways and means committee, Assistant Majority Leader Magtanggol Gunigundo said some legislators were not too keen on House Bill No. 6727 sponsored by Cavite Rep. Joseph Emilio A. Abaya because of the positive increase in taxes on alcoholic drinks and tobacco products in the years.

"HB 6727 should not just be designed to raise revenues but also give local industries room to survive and let our workers make a decent living. We fear the possibilities of bootlegging where the quality of liquor cannot be assured and taxes are not collected," said Gunigundo.

Hundreds of tobacco farmers and distillers staged a protest yesterday during the second day of hearings for the proposed six-tax reform pushed by Malacañang to boost revenues.

Eloisa Sec. Rep. Ryan Luis Singson said the committee should consider the alternative bill drafted by the sub-committee on revenue generation as he expressed doubts on the viability of the government's plan to provide livelihood projects to affected tobacco farmers in Northern Luzon.

Prosecutors buck military trial for Pestaño suspects

By Lolo B. Saluverria

CAMIGUINAS prosecutors have contested the plea of Navy officers charged with the murder of Ensign Philip Pestaño to transfer their case to a military tribunal, but also said they were willing to have the case transferred to the appropriate court if it finds that the Sandiganbayan has no jurisdiction over the case.

In its reply to motions and opposition filed before the Sandiganbayan Third Division, the prosecutors asked the court to hold in abeyance the resolution of the motion to quash the murder charges filed by the accused.

The prosecutors said they are still checking the contention of Naval Capt. Ricardo Ordoñez that the bank note on Lt. Commander Abe when Pestaño was found dead aboard the Navy ship that he commanded in 1995.

Had that been the case, the murder charge against Ordoñez and the other Navy officers should not have been filed in the Sandiganbayan.

But according to prosecutors, Ordoñez's own S-2/CIC-counter-affidavit to the murder complaint showed that his rank was Naval Captain. They also said the statement of service that he submitted to the court did not state what his rank was when Pestaño died.

The prosecutors also said Ordoñez's rank could only be validated once the Navy produces supporting documents.

They also said they subpoenaed the service records of all the accused to determine their exact ranks, since or designations when they committed the alleged crimes were filed. But the Navy, instead of complying with the subpoena, just forwarded it to the Navy Judge Advocate for comment.

Still, they are willing to withdraw the case if it is shown that it should have been filed in another court.

"The prosecution is amenable to the withdrawal of the information should there be an official document to show that the position of the accused does not fall within the jurisdiction of the Sandiganbayan," they said.

As for the Navy officers' plea to bring their case to a military tribunal, the prosecutors said Ordoñez has already retired while two others—Lt. Cmdr. Ruben Maquiso was no longer in service service.

They also said the jurisdiction of a court martial is limited to service-connected crimes, and murder is not one of them.

In their pleading, the prosecutors also asked the Sandiganbayan not to allow the Navy officers to file their motion for reconsideration of the Ombudsman resolution ordering them for murder. They said the five-day period for filing the motion has lapsed.

They also opposed the plea of the accused to lift their hold department order, saying that since the court has not yet ruled on the jurisdiction over the case, the issuance of a hold department order was proper since it is intended to follow-up the filing of the charge sheet.

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Gov't lifts 'au pair' ban to Europe

By Jerry E. Esplanada

THE GOVERNMENT has lifted the ban on the deployment of Filipino "au pair" to Europe, Foreign Secretary Albert del Rosario announced yesterday.

An au pair—"equal in" in French—is a young woman, aged between 18 and 30, unmarried and without any children, who is placed under a cultural exchange arrangement with a host European family for a maximum of two years.

During the period, an pair "live with their host families on an equal basis and shall be given pocket money for doing child care and other light household chores" while undergoing cultural immersion and language programs.

The lifting of the ban, which was imposed in 1998 due to reported abuse of the system, was made following the "issuance of new guidelines on the deployment of Filipino-hosted au pairs," Del Rosario said.

"The new guidelines are meant to facilitate the deployment of au pairs and at the same time, provide them safety nets and protection," he said.

The guidelines were "finalized and agreed upon by an ad hoc technical working group, composed of the DFA, Department of Labor and Employment, Department of Education, Bureau of Immigration, Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, and the Commission on Filipinos Overseas."

"Under the guidelines, procedures for the departure of au pairs have been simplified and documentary requirements are down to the minimum," said Del Rosario.

According to the DFA head, "a strict monitoring system shall be put in place by the Philippine embassies and consulates in Europe for the protection of Filipino au pairs."

"No person could go through the SOLO (or DOFA) procedure as au pairs as they are not considered overseas Filipino workers," said Del Rosario.

The ban on au pairs was imposed in 1998 due to what the DFA referred to as "isolated cases of abuse of the system by some unscrupulous elements."

PH to host 19th ASEPSW Divisional Meeting and UNGEGN Seminar

The Philippines through the National Mapping and Resource Information Authority (NAMRIA), the central mapping and geospatial resource agency of the government, will host the 19th Asia Pacific Southeast UNGEGN Divisional Meeting and Seminar on Geographical Names of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographic Names (UNGEGN). These will be held at the Manila Marriott Hotel, Pasay City on 27-28 February 2012.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Ramon Jesus P. Paje will deliver the keynote address during the opening program. Officials who will likewise grace the said events are Usec. Rene N. Tinagan, NAMRIA Administrator, and the Chairman of the UNGEGN ASEPSW Division, Datuk Prof. Dr. Dr. Abdul Kadir Bin Taib, who is also the Director General of Survey and Mapping Malaysia.

The Seminar on Geographic Names features the following topics: "Activities on geographical names in Malaysia", "Labels and Placenames: Historical Notes on Place Naming in the Philippines", and "The Significance of Toponymic Geographic Factors in the Delineation of Administrative Provinces". The resource persons are from the National Center for Geospatial Data Infrastructure, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, and from the Department of History and the Department of Geography, University of the Philippines Diliman.

The participants are cartographers, geographers, historians, linguists, census experts, planners, and surveyors from various regional/geographical divisions that have been established by the United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names. The UNGEGN activities provided technical recommendations on standardizing geographical names at the national and international levels. There are currently about 23 divisions that guide the work of the UNGEGN during and between its sessions.

The Philippines is one of the member countries of the UNGEGN ASEPSW Division with the following other countries as members: Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Fiji, Indonesia, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nauru, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Vanuatu, and Vietnam. Today, the UNGEGN is one of the newly expert groups in the UN Economic and Social Council, with over 400 members from more than 100 countries.

Correction

IN EARLIER EDITIONS of the Feb. 21 issue, a photo caption on Page A6 misnamed that heavyweight champion Muhammad Ali won by decision in his title fight against Joe Frazier in Manila on Oct. 1, 1975. Ali won the fight by TKO to retain his title.

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DFA presses drive for overseas voting

By Jerry E. Esplanada

THE DEPARTMENT of Foreign Affairs (DFA) has directed the country's 67 embassies and 23 consulates abroad to intensify further their respective Overseas Absentee Voters (OAV) voter-education campaigns.

Raul Hernandez, the DFA spokesperson, yesterday, said "our diplomatic posts continue to intensify their efforts to increase the number of OAV registrants and voters for the 2013 national elections."

So far, a total of 33,693 overseas Filipinos have registered as OAVs, according to DFA records.

In a report posted on its website, the DFA said Philippine nationals based in Los Angeles, California, topped the list of OAV registrants with 2,404, followed by those in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 1,663; Tel Aviv, Israel, 1,427; Milan, Italy, 1,299; London, 1,115; Hong Kong, 1,047; San Francisco, California, 952; Singapore, 879; Muscat, 804; and Toronto, Canada, 776.

Rounding up the top 20 places were Filipino communities in Barcelona, Spain, 689; Beirut, Lebanon, 627; New York, 608; Chicago, 606; Vancouver, 491; Manama, Bahrain, 374; Honolulu, Hawaii, 374; Washington, D.C., 368; Tokyo, 361; and Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, 354.

By region, the American region around the highest number of OAVs with 7,128, followed by the Middle East and Africa, 6,239; Europe, 5,238; and Asia and the Pacific, 4,569.

According to Hernandez, "our foreign service posts have conducted hare with Filipino communities and local non-governmental organizations, civil society groups, as well as church and other Filipino groups."

"They also issued press releases and launched multimedia campaigns, using various social networking sites," he added.

The 12-month OAV registration runs from Oct. 10, 2011 to Oct. 31 this year.

Again, oil firms up prices

OIL COMPANIES raised fuel prices anew yesterday to reflect the rosette and upward of oil prices in the global market last week.

Independent player Seaoil Petroleum Corp. was the first to announce that it would jack up prices of gasoline by P1.1 a liter and diesel, by 50 centavos a liter.

The other oil firms meanwhile made their announcements after implementing their respective price adjustments also yesterday.

Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. and Seoil Philippines said they have hiked prices of premium gasoline by P1.10 a liter, regular gasoline by P1.30 a liter; kerosene by 50 centavos a liter, and oil diesel by 50 centavos a liter.

Petron Corp. and Chevron Philippines implemented the same increases except for the prices of regular gasoline, which they hiked by P1.30 a liter, and of kerosene, by 50 centavos a liter.

Prior to this week's oil price hikes, gasoline prices ranged from P54.48 a liter to P58.50 a liter, while diesel products totalled anywhere between P44.89 a liter to P48.38 a liter.

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Senate to probe BSP on auditing accounts of PEP

By TJ Burgonio

REVELATIONS in the impeachment trial of Chief Justice Renato Corona have prompted the Senate to inquire into the central bank's power to audit accounts of a politically exposed person (PEP), fueling this person's motivation regimes investigated on the Filipinos' basic right to privacy.

Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile and other senators yesterday issued letters to the committee on banks to look into the power of Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) to classify people as PEP and audit PEP accounts.

Sen. Sergio Osmeña III, the committee chair, agreed to conduct the inquiry beginning on Monday.

"If it's true that they accessed somebody's account without complying with the requirements of the law, why should we tolerate this? The people are involved; deposits are involved; our banking system is involved," Enrile said on the floor.

"This is a serious matter. Only to[illegible] committee can look into the private affairs of people. We're not, we're a democratic country," he added, during a plenary interpellation on bills amending the Anti-Money Laundering Act provided by Sen. Loren Legarda.

On Monday, Philippine Savings Bank (Philsaka) president Panfilo Garcia III said a representative of the Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC) had asked for photocopies of Corona's signature cards during an audit, and that a team from the BSP and AMLC conducted a bank-wide audit of Philsaka records.

Source of leak

The disclosures raised the possibility that the AMLC leaked photocopies of Corona's signature cards to the prosecution.

According to Garcia, Philsaka was advised to put the suspicious PEP on Corona's records and that under AMLC rules, elected and appointed public officials are considered PEP and should be classified in bank records as such.

Sen. Benigno Aquino said: "We will. Give them a lawyer first."

Senate Majority Leader Vicente Sotto III observed that the AMLC chief Corona was issued in early 2011, the BSP began auditing accounts of PEPs in September 2010, so Garcia had testified on Monday.

Angara moved that the committee on banks inquire into the scope, implications and source of authority of the BSP in classifying individuals as PEPs.

Angara inquired on the floor about the implications of the classifications of PEPs by BSP and Enrile responded by saying that foreign banks don't accept deposits from politicians because of PEPs.

Invasion of privacy

Stating this, Angara remarked: "It's worse than I thought. That is why when I read, I was a special watch list for PEPs. You can be the subject of an audit, and your accounts would be the first to be examined. You can't think of a worst case of invasion of your privacy than that because there is no prior declaration from the court."

He added: "I thought the would imply deprivation or withdrawal of credit. It's worse than deprivation of credit. I'll join my colleagues in asking the banks concerned are to look into this administrative fine."

Malacañang expressed support for the Senate inquiry.

"We welcome the investigation because it's an imposition (that) something's wrong in the banking system and definitely the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas will not agree to that," presidential spokesperson Edwin Lacierda said in yesterday's news briefing.

Lacierda said both the BSP and AMLC had denied getting access to Corona's bank records.

"And that's the reason why they came out with a strong statement, as well as the Anti-Money Laundering Council," Lacierda said. "They have to clear their names and if an investigation will push through, certainly I believe BSP will be more than willing to appear before the investigation and explain the process." With a report from Norman Bordadora

Lacson blames 'fast break' mode for prosecutors' woes

By Cathy C. Yamsuan, Michael Lim Ubac and TJ Burgonio

SEN. PANFILO Lacson yesterday blamed the "fast break" mode the prosecutors used in crafting the impeachment complaint for the lackluster they were getting from the Senate tribunal.

"If the prosecution chose the mode where the complaint had to undergo committee hearings before approval, they could have scrutinized the evidence against the Chief Justice better. But as it is, the complaint did not undergo preliminary investigation," observed Lacson, a former deputy director general of the Philippine National Police.

Because of their fast break, the prosecutors easily got more than one-third of the House and the complaint was immediately transmitted to the Senate. Before, the prosecution contends a lot of hurdles and processes are receiving letters from senior judges, especially the presiding officer," he added.

Raised expectations

It did not help that prosecutors raised public expectation by hanging their supposed evidence like proof that Corona owned a posh penthouse in Taguig City would-be for the impeachment trial's allegations on Jan. 16.

"In so doing, they raised the bar of expectations of senators, judges and the public. The prosecutors claimed 45 properties but they could not even come up with 45 or 30. They claimed to have 100 witnesses but how many have they presented so far? That's the trouble when you raise expectations. That would have an impact on you," Lacson said in an ambush interview.

A day after Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile disallowed the testimony of Philippine Savings Bank president Enrique Javier, Sen. Jinggoy Estrada warned prosecutors they should have evidence for "more substantial" if they would insist on their current week ruling.

"The fact that no one stood up to question the Senate President's ruling against the PSI, witness memory overseer agreed with it. Besides, one of the prosecutors...Rizza Nante Bay, Rodolfo Fortiñas—admitted in open court that the impeachment complaint is defective," Estrada said.

Wasting time

"If the complaint was defective, then they should have dismissed it at the onset," said House Majority Leader Neptali Gonzales II. "This we're just wasting time here; if they have that virus...that is a defective—then we're just having a farce trial here."

"Of course, I feel 'bad—no question about it, all of us," Speaker Feliciano Belmonte said.

"But we are really hurt by the type of language used [in] our prosecutors, but we will continue to pursue the case and we're not going to make a big thing out of it knowing the situation is—that we're the judge," he said.

"Although I'm unhappy about it, we have to rule it out, although senators and congressmen are equals," Belmonte added.

The Speaker said that the House panel would proceed to prosecute Corona on other articles of impeachment "if we have the votes."

Impartiality

Enrile added: De Lima if her department would have allowed Arroyo to leave if all the conditions of the TRO were met.

"Maybe or maybe not," she replied. "But my view is that the TRO was improper to the sense that a TRO... is supposed to preserve the status quo pending the disposition of the merits of the main petition."

Majority decision

De Lima argued that the Nov 15 TRO "had the effect of rendering the disposition of the main petition (Hacon or Imelda) moot because it is as if you granted already the petition because the main issue really is—should we allow the former President to leave the country despite the pendency of these high cases against her."

When asked by Cuevas if there was a conspiracy among agencies that led to the issuance of the TRO, De Lima said:

"The conspiracy between they mean the questionable TRO? Well, the Chief Justice is only one vote of course when it comes to decisions. But there are other things...there are other duties, functions and powers of the Chief Justice as primus inter pares."

Cuevas cut her off and said she was not responding to the question.

He then asked her: "This TRO could not have come into effect were it not for a fact that the majority of the court no longer decided to grant the same? It could not have been possible by the mere say-so of Chief Justice Corona, is it not?" De Lima replied yes in both.

Cuevas followed up by asking her if the responsibility was shouldered then by all signatories in the TRO.

De Lima said: "If we talk only about voting, and the position with respect to the propriety of the TRO with respect to those concerning that TRO and the time you project in that view...that's their position as the majority then yes."

CJ wanted to help GMA escape, says De Lima; so, she opted to defy it

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if Corona wanted to help Arroyo escape.

She said the proof was the usual order allowing the government only three days, instead of the standard 10 days, to respond to the Hon. 35 non-meritorious motions, and serving the oral arguments in a few days' time.

"In the issuance of the TRO, it was Nov. 15, and we were given a limited period to file a comment in three days, due on Nov. 18, and then there are the oral arguments on Nov. 22. That's not common, no. Normally the respondents are given a period of 10 days to file a comment, and after which, if the court so desires, we are the same be oral arguments," she said.

Irrelevant, impertinent

"If they intended to get a comment from us in three days, and they intended to hear us out in oral arguments, why issue the TRO on Nov. 15?"

In one of his unchoreographically five objections on Day 22 of the impeachment trial, Cuevas questioned the "relevance" of De Lima's testimony.

He said it was "practically amending, circulating the decision" of the high tribunal.

"It has nothing to do with the impeachment complaint against Chief Justice Corona," he told the court, before reciting the charge contained in Article 7.

"What the nothing has to[illegible] this either. What is being discussed, with due respect to the witness, are matters that are entirely irrelevant and impertinent," he said.

Cuevas added: "We have been very tolerant in this matter because we want at least as to the real purpose of the introduction of the honorable secretary in connection with these matters."

Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile, the presiding officer in the impeachment trial, ruled the objection but allowed De Lima to continue her testimony.

He was generally polite and accommodating of both the prosecution and De Lima, after he scolded prosecutors over their faulty articles of impeachment on Tuesday.

Enrile asked if De Lima knew of any instance in which the government—when the respondent acted alone in issuing any order, any process or any resolution issuing on this particular instance."

Dissenting opinion

De Lima said "no" but she asked the court to look into the dissenting opinions in connection with the TRO, particularly that of Associate Justice Leonardo Sereno, President Aquino's first appointee to the high tribunal.

"I think Justice Sereno's account on how Corona purportedly tried to make it appear that Arroyo had complied with all the conditions set in the TRO.

The order was to take effect only if Arroyo said "had deposited would post a 10 million cash bond, appoint a legal representative, and report to the Philippine embassy or consulate in the country they were planning to visit.

De Lima referred to Sereno's opinion revealing that the court, voting 7-6, had misled that Arroyo had already complied with the second condition.

"They didn't have to say if the TRO was suspended because it was clear, common sense, Dr. quote) out of the justices, that it was understood that because the conditions pending compliance with those conditions, it cannot be considered as already effective," said the justice secretary.

Cuevas, who allowed De Lima's talk at length without any interruption from the defense, later told the impeachment court: "There can be no 'assuming' unless we say decision that can come out without the majority participating therein, whether it's an act based decision or merely a decision in chief one."

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Prosecutors drop 2 charges in Article 3 of impeach complaint

his wife Cristina to Camp Aguinaldo Development Corp. and Corona's purported discussion with Lucio Vicondoy of the murder case of Andrew Webb.

Recondo, who was also named in the murder case of Webb, had gone to Corona to inquire about the case before Webb, son of former Sen. Freddie Webb, was acquitted by the high court, based in December 2008.

Sen. Miriam Defensor Santiago said Enrile's suspicion (Angara's) Aquino's announcement praising the abstinon on the two charges was "unconventional," but can be taken bearing the prosecution panel for insisting that Enrique Javier, PSI vice president for safety, could testify on a charge that was not included in Article 3.

Tactic like in Erap's case

Santiago warned that presentation of evidences not included in an article of impeachment was the same tactic used by prosecutors in the impeachment trial of then President Joseph Estrada in 2001 when they insisted on presenting the contents of the so-called second envelope.

Senator judges at that time voted 11-10 to reject the presentation that was supposedly proof that Estrada and his family received bribes from "jueteng" (illegal gambling) operators.

Article 3 accuses Corona of culpable violation of the Constitution and betrayal of public trust for failing to meet "ethical standards," specifically his non-disclosure of his and his wife (Cristina's) frequent round-trip flights using "first class tickets" provided by PAL.

Prosecutors had planned to show that the perks PAL offered to Corona could be behind the questionable decisions the Chief Justice allegedly made in favor of airline.

'Unconventional' move

Angelino and that following Enrile's ruling against Javier's testimony. The prosecution would now limit its offer of evidence on that specific accusation to the testimonies of Rep. Edcel Lagman and Bienvenido Abante of the Philippines Chicago) presidents Robert Andrada.

Sen. Francis Escudero, however, was able to clarify during his questioning of Agabao that Corona's alleged connection to corruption with the Pasig case would be the sole charge in Article 3 and would be voted upon by the senator-judges at the conclusion of the impeachment trial.

Santiago stood up to note that Agabao's move was unconventional. "Why were you wearing the time of this court?" she asked.

Agabao said the prosecution realized the need to "address" the [illegible] charges in the two other charges in Article 3 were dropped.

At the end of the trial, Santiago again fired her guns at unnamed justices who insisted on presenting Javier's testimony.

Due process

Santiago, a former trial judge, pointed out that the bill of Rights gave an accused the right to be informed of the specific criminal charges leveled against him.

"That is how the Constitution defines due process ... We must observe that due process is essential to the fairness of any criminal proceeding or in a non-criminal proceeding such as acts of the nature and cause of the accusation against him. We cannot submit testimony or any oral or evidence concerning an offense which is not charged in the complaint or information. In this case, in the articles of impeachment," she explained.

"There are countless rulings (before) ... ranging a time now, who mentioned what in the different courts? That's just another witness, just put him on the stand (Angelino) lang [only]. That is violative of the due process clause of the Constitution," Santiago fumed.

The senator recalled that the same situation surfaced during the Estrada impeachment trial, when prosecutors were adamant that presentation of evidence on the second envelope supposed to contain the then President's ties with jueteng lords.

"I pointed out that unless the prosecution first amended their information [we cannot] open the second envelope," she recalled.

Santiago said the envelope was eventually opened and there was "nothing incriminating" in its contents.

Body of inconsistencies

"It is fatal to a criminal case when rules are not followed, so you must be careful in drafting a complaint. Make sure every thing is there. There are many Latinisms who think they are lawyers, but you who are they? The law! You invoke God this is only a technicality where the law is exactly a body of technicalities," she said.

Santiago obviously referred to the lead House prosecutor Niel Tupaz Jr., who argued that the nonmention of bribery which Javier's testimony was about, would not be fatal to the case against Corona was a "technicality."

Tupaz was trying to convince Enrile at that time to accommodate Javier as his testimony would supposedly bolster the charge of betrayal of public trust against the Chief Justice.

"Be careful where you think you know better than a lawyer or a judge. So filled with hubris about ignorance," Santiago added.

Sen. Jinggoy Estrada told the reporter in a phone interview that Enrile's decision on the prosecution's presentation of Javier's testimony, "it would have been a repeat of what prosecutors did during my trial, that's trial."

"Imagine if we had to decide the case again, put the issue to a vote and have consequences beyond our control," Estrada said.

TOGETHER AGAIN

'Drama' over for feuding Ampatuans

By Philip Tubeza

TOGETHER again?

Last year, former Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) Gov. Zaldy Ampatuan offered to testify against his own father and brother in the Maguindanao massacre.

This time around, they'll be sharing the same defense lawyer.

Sigrid Kahlon, the defense counsel of Ampatuan clan patriarch Andal Ampatuan Sr. and Andal Jr., yesterday said that his first would soon also be handling Zaldy's defense after the latter's lawyer, Bedonimeda Villanueva, withdrew his/her appearance as the former ARMM governor's lead counsel.

Fortun also confirmed in a text message yesterday that he/she first found he/she replacing Villanueva.

What about if Zaldy was on good terms with his father and brother, Fortun said: "Yes."

It was private prosecutor Petue Quimoyan, legal counsel of the Freedom Fund for Filipino Journalists, who raised the matter during the hearing of the massacre case yesterday at the Quezon City regional trial court.

Lawyer's letter

Quimoyan said her office received the letter from Villanueva informing her that he was withdrawing as Zaldy's lead counsel.

"But what was curious was that it was accompanied inside an envelope of Fortun, Narvasa and Salazar (Fortun's law firm)," Quimoyan said.

The Feb. 10 letter from Villanueva said he was withdrawing as lead counsel but would remain collaborating counsel for Zaldy, she added.

Quimoyan said her office also received Zaldy's reply to the motion of prosecutors to fix income for reconsideration at the Court of Appeals.

The ARMM governor had gone to the appellate court to challenge the Department of Justice order charging him for the massacre. Because of this pending motion, he has yet to be arraigned as a defendant in the massacre case.

"So we wanted to know if (Bonoyn's) lawyer was already taking over as his lead counsel," Quimoyan said.

No formal notice

Judge Jocelyn Solis-Reyes replied that the court had yet to receive a formal notice from Fortun who was not present at yesterday's hearing.

In a TV interview in July 2011, Zaldy offered to become a state witness in the massacre case and even hinted that he was prepared to testify against his father, former Maguindanao Gov. Andal Ampatuan Sr., and brothers Datu Unsay Mayor Andal Ampatuan Jr.

He also alleged that former President and now Pampanga Rep. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and her husband, Jose Miguel Arroyo, were involved in election cheating during the 2007 presidential elections.

However, prosecutors even at that time were doubtful that Zaldy would go against his father and siblings although he was transferred from the fourth floor to the third floor of the Quezon City Jail Annex in Camp Bagong Diwa, Bicutan, Taguig, supposedly to keep him away from the other Ampatuans.

Muddling the case

"It's a game plan to muddle the case. If these were true, the camps of Andal Jr. and Andal Jr.) would already be reacting. But there's no statement. What does this mean? It's drama," said private prosecutor Nena Santos.

"He's a desperate person coming the names to use to what cases can't be rendered ... And in the Maslon condition, going against your father is a big no-no. You'd rather die. But go against the father? Never," she added.

Security tight for arraignment of GMA today

By Nathaniel R. Molcon

SECURITY will be tight today at the Pasay Regional Trial Court in preparation for the arraignment of former president Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo for electoral sabotage.

Sinulmad Capital Region Police Office chief Director Alan Purisima and officers from the Pasay City Police Station and the local Metro Police District will be in charge of securing the area around the trial court.

"We have sufficient policemen from the Pasay police who will be deployed in the area," Purisima said in an interview yesterday.

He added that the Philippine National Police's Protective Security Personnel Office will be in charge of securing Arroyo's transfer from the Veterans' Memorial Medical Center (VMMC) to the trial court.

"The SCIPO can provide additional men on the day," Purisima said.

Earlier, Pasay Regional Trial Court Branch 112 Judge Jesus Mupas granted Arroyo's plea to be arraigned earlier than her co-accused, who include former Commission on Elections chair Benjamin Abalos and former Maguindanao election supervisor Lintang Bedol.

The other respondents are expected to be arraigned on March 27.

House minority twits prosecution for choosing PAL union lawyer

By Cliff C. Cabanongan

WHAT IS a lawyer of the Philippine Airlines Employees' Association (Palea) doing in the impeachment trial of Chief Justice Renato Corona?

House Minority Leader Danilo Ramos and Tañeza-Isla City Rep. Bhagwaggel Garcia said yesterday they would write Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile to block the move.

Ramos said the prosecution should have been more discriminating in choosing its private counsel especially those who have other motives in ousting Corona.

Ramos said the House prosecution team should have not allowed Dr. Impeachment Ltd to be used by groups wanting to get back at Corona.

"I think the senators made the correct decision and in accordance with the rule[ruling for Article 3," Ramos said.

Lumiqued said that while there was nothing illegal with Manuel joining the House prosecution team, he said it was improper for a lawyer to be arguing a case in the impeachment court in which he has a vested interest.

Palea has long opposed the outsourcing plan of PAL to service the turbulent conditions in the airline industry.

Palea was derailed four times by the Department of Labor and Employment and the Office of the President in its appeal to block the layoff of 2,500 Palea members from the airline's ground handling unit covering all the said major international airports.

Pacquiao 'embarrassed' by Mayweather offer

LOS ANGELES—Manny Pacquiao said the pieces were falling into place for a world title fight with Floyd Mayweather Jr. until the American boxer tried to low-ball him on the eight of the pay-per-view revenue.

The Filipino boxer said he called Mayweather personally to try to broker a deal for a world championship fight and thought they had an agreement until the latter brought up the pay-per-view.

Mayweather said he would give Pacquiao a $40-million lump sum if Pacquiao agreed to let Mayweather keep the pay-per-view earnings for himself.

"It was embarrassing to me," Pacquiao said on Tuesday. "He was trying to take advantage of me. Is it close he didn't want to fight."

Some reports have estimated that the pay-per-view would be around $100 million.

Pacquiao said Mayweather have tried several times to get a contract signed but it has been derailed for a variety of reasons, including disagreements over blood testing and the share of the purse.

"I called Floyd and told him that we need to make this fight happen," Pacquiao said at The Beverly Hills Hotel.

"I said he could have whatever he wants, blood testing, 50/50 split and he said 'Oh, well. I will give you what you want.' Then he mentioned the pay-per-view."

Other opponents

For now, Pacquiao and the Mayweather Promotions have lined up other opponents with speculation that the mega fight could happen later in the year if it comes off at all.

Pacquiao is scheduled to face Americans Timothy Bradley on June 9 at the MGM Grand Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas for Pacman's World Boxing Organization welterweight belt.

Mayweather is set to fight Puerto Rico's Miguel Cotto on May 5 for the latter's World Boxing Association super welterweight title at the same venue.

Pacquiao's camp believes Freddie Roach said he was not taking Bradley lightly, but added it was hard not to get excited about a possible upcoming mega fight against Mayweather.

"If both [Pacquiao and May-weather] come off with good wins it will be a step in the right direction," Roach said on Tuesday. "That is the match everyone in the world wants to see."

Bradley won one of several fighters in the mix seen as a possible Pacquiao opponent after wins with Mayweather fell through.

Bradley leaves a record of 26-0 with 12 knockouts. Pacquiao, 34-3-2 with 19 knockouts, hasn't lost since March 2005 and is considered the best pound-for-pound boxer on the planet.

But Pacquiao was less than dominant as he struggled to a majority points decision over Mexican Juan Manuel Marquez in November last year.

Promo tour

Bradley and Pacquiao kicked off their promotional tour on Tuesday at The Grove by Rilla Hotel. They smiled as they posed with glitzy showgirls and Pacquiao playfully borrowed a camera and took pictures of Bradley in his boxing pose.

Joining aside, Roach said he supported Pacquiao to knock Bradley out.

"I don't want him to be compassionate," Roach said. "I want him to knock people out. Man up can't be a nice guy and try to touch gloves in the ring with him."

Roach said Bradley was more than just a replacement fighter and that the Pacquiao camp wanted to hand him the first loss of his career while he is still in his prime.

"It is nice to fight a fighter who is undefeated [and] not excited about losing that it on his record," Roach said.

Bradley, of Palm Springs, California, is coming off an eight-round knockout victory over former world champion Joel Casamayor.

The 28-year old Bradley said he planned to take the fight to the 33 year-old Pacquiao.

Going out flaming

Bradley said he wouldn't make the same mistakes as Joshua Gomez and Shane Mosley who were found because they suffered a good fight but didn't back it up since they got in the ring with eight-division champion Pacquiao.

"They were older and older losers don't take chances like young fighters do," Bradley said.

"I don't have a lot of risks on me like Manny. If I am going out there I am going out flaming. He is going to have to knock me out. Manny is going to have to kill me to stop me," he added.

Bad habits

Pacquiao will travel to New York for another news conference on Thursday and then fly back to the Philippines where he is a member of Congress.

Pacquiao has also distanced himself of some bad habits, selling a casino he owned and getting rid of the fighting cocks in the Philippines.

"Manny got a lot of distractions out of his life," Roach said. "He sold all his cocks for fighting, doesn't gamble, doesn't drink and he and his wife are getting along." AFP

THE LADY IN WAITING Adel Arroyo attends a court hearing in Quezon City. MARIANNE BERMUDEZ

Iggy Arroyo wake scheduled

BASED ON the schedule announced yesterday, the wake will take place in three areas following his arrival from his exile in the Kingdom of Abeli.

He will first lie in state at the Arroyos' ancestral home of Balud in Masbate province, where Iggy and his late wife were married.

On Sunday, the body will be brought to the overseas terminal of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport—the former of Abeli Arroyo, the ancestral home of the Arroyos and Batobalo City, then back to Abeli's house before interment on Saturday.

Abeli and Arroyo's body is to be transported by Buna from London, would be brought from the airport to the Arlington mortuary in Quezon City.

On Saturday at 10 a.m., the body will be moved to the ancestral house of the Arroyos at No. 14 Balbao St., La Vera subdivision, Quezon City.

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Ibuna lawyer: Abeli not Iggy's legal wife due to technicality

From page A1

because the annulment was not required to the local registry office and the court had not issued a certificate of finality," De Vera said.

She said the annulment was handed out in a court in Pangasinan province, where Iggy said his late wife were married.

Answered prayers

But Abeli said that she felt good about the arrangement on the wake and burial were finalized on the agreement drawn by her lawyers, Buna and Arroyo's daughter by his first wife, Bernardine Arroyo-Tatlonen.

"I am happy. I feel very good. I am telling Abeli she's settled because she felt about the arrangement reached by the parties on Tuesday evening."

She said her daughter with the lawmaker, Melissa, 34, prayed with her on the quiet corners of the bedroom they shared.

"That is answered prayers," Abeli said.

The Buna cited Articles 53, 54 and 55 of the Batobalo Code, which say that all cases of nullity of marriage should be reported to the proper government agency, the local registry offices.

The lawmaker died in London on Jan. 26 due to a liver ailment, with partner Grace Bunta at his sickbed.

But Abeli, who said she was happy that her husband's body was finally coming home, maintained that she was the legal wife.

Best evidence

"The best evidence of my losing the legal wife is our marriage certificate," Abeli told the lawyers when asked to comment on De Vera's contention that the Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 93 should not grant her an injunction against Buna because her marriage to Arroyo was not valid.

She also said that she had received a letter of sympathy from Batobalo President and now Pampanga Rep. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, who is detained in a government hospital on charges of electoral sabotage. The former President was reportedly close to her late husband's mother.

"It was a letter advising me to remember the good memories," said Abeli, who disclosed that she would write the former President to express her gratitude.

Asked if the agreement on the wake and burial were disclosed in open court after a closed-door session with Judge Bernardo Ballad, who was hearing the petition of Abeli against Buna and Senator.

Due to the out-of-court agreement, Ballad said at yesterday's hearing that he would soon for the signed documents of the deal, which were supposed to be submitted before ordering the dismissal of the petition of injunction.

Abeli earlier asked the court for a temporary restraining order and injunction to stop Buna Arroyo; the lawmaker's daughter with his former wife, Marilyn Aceres, and Buna from claiming her husband's body.

Tanseco said she was happy that her father's remains were finally coming home so there's closure to the controversy.

"I am relieved and glad and my father will be finally laid to rest peacefully," Tanseco told the Inquirer after yesterday's proceedings.

Pacquiao swept up in Linsanity

From page A1

Pacquiao said the bout is in effect a press conference yesterday at Beverly Hills Hotel, which kicked off the promotional tour for the welterweight bout with Australian Timothy Bradley. The fight is scheduled for June but the MGM Grand Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas.

The Filipino boxing superstar said he was scheduled to meet with Taiwanese-American Lin, the new night sensation of the Golden State Basketball Association (NBA), before the start of the New York Knicks' game against the Atlanta Hawks on Wednesday in New York. The hero over Lin's phenomenal success has been dubbed "Linsanity."

Pacquiao said he would tell Lin to "keep up the good work."

"I want to promote people who shine with their God-given talent, following His commandments," he said, referring to Lin.

Bible ambassador

Last month, Pacquiao was asked by Catholic Church leaders in the Philippines to follow in the footsteps of National Football League (NFL) hero, Tim Tebow, and Christian—"Bible enthusiastic." Tebow was known in the Philippines to an American missionary couple.

Pacquiao accepted the invitation of the Philippine Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) to help strengthen the Church's biblical apostolate in the country.

He said he was looking forward to his meeting with Lin, a devout Christian who often quotes biblical verses during games. He added that he would like to watch Lin play if his schedule would allow.

Mayweather

Earlier reports said that while in New York, Pacquiao would also meet with his team of lawyers to discuss the filing of a defamation lawsuit against his arch-enemy, Floyd Mayweather Jr., and his father and uncle Roger.

Mayweather recently slammed controversy when he said on Twitter that "throwing Lin is a good move, but still no hope in hell since he's Asian. Black players do what he does every night and don't get the same praise."

When asked about Mayweather's comment, Pacquiao defended Lin, saying Lin has been getting national attention because of his ability and that race was not a factor. He said Lin was not right for Mayweather to "judge" Lin.

"If somebody's judging others, let God judge them," Pacquiao said. Even as intended to quote a biblical verse: "Do not judge or you, too, will be judged."

Mayweather has also made racially insensitive comments about Pacquiao. In November 2010, he told the Filipino in a video to "make some more rice and cook some rice." He added that "we're going to cook him with some oats and dogs."

Similarities

Pacquiao fans have drawn similarities between the champion boxer and Lin. Both are known for their humility, strong work ethic and for professing to be devout Christians.

"God's given me a unique platform and right now I'm trying to use it in the right way," Lin was recently quoted as saying. "I am one national television. I can use media in a way to talk about my faith, to talk about how much God has done in my life, not what I've done to make it to the NBA."

June 9 match

Pacquiao talked to reporters about his religious transformation, saying he "found real happiness" in his life through Christ's commandments and how to use his "talents[gifts of talents," he said.

He talked at a briefing session. "I'm not gonna stop living or boxing," he said.

At the press conference, Pacquiao and Bradley posed for photos and gestured each other.

"I'm thrilled to be strong and the last punch. He's a good boxer so it's a challenge for fighter guys like that," Pacquiao told reporters. "I have to train hard. I have to be 110-percent conditioned and prepared."

Pacquiao, 33, will take his 54th career fight against Bradley, 28, the WBO junior welterweight champion[, in a pay-per-view bout at the MGM Grand Garden Arena.

Tickets for the fight will go on sale on Feb. 24, go.ticket-master.com. $600, $400 and $400 to be limited to 12 per person. The $250 tickets will be limited to two per person. Tickets will also be available at www.mgmgrand.com or www.ticketmaster.com.

LIN

SHOOT Manny Pacquiao takes a photo of comedian Timothy Bradley Jr. during Tuesday's news conference in Los Angeles to promote their upcoming championship fight. Kevin Vigar. At right, the two boxers laugh as they look at the photos that Pacquiao took during the news conference. REUTERS

Here are some of the 1st Draw Winners:

Milyong Pasasalamat

Columbia's

75th

Philippines' Choice

Congratulations!

2nd draw winners

Mary Jane T. Diaz
42A Luna St. Poblacion, Urdaneta
Pangasinan

5 winners of Php 50,000 each

*All prizes Php 10,000.00 above are subject to 20% tax.

Wea Jamaica Villanueva
15-D Maunlad St., Brgy. Pinyahan
Quezon City

Ma. Fatima Galulan
Purok Brotherhood Sum-ag
Bacolod City

Maria Cecilia S. Parico
Sto. Tereseita, Iriga City

Rhealee Vergara
Greenhills Catalunan Pequeno
Davao City

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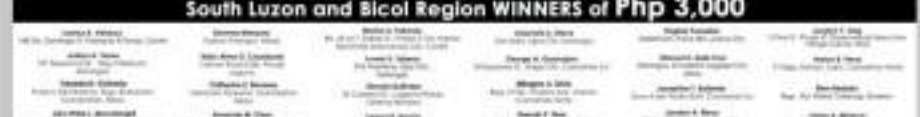

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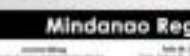

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Assistant Editor Tony Bergonia

Across the NATION

Hataman clears way for log permits

HATAMAN

DUMINGAG, Zamboanga del Sur—The highest ranking officer in charge of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) has ordered an inventory of tree plantations in the region in preparation for the possible issuance of permits to cut trees provided these were not from natural growth forests.

Mujib Hataman, acting ARMM governor, said the inventory was needed to determine which individuals or companies would be issued tree-cutting permits.

Following the Dec. 17 disaster that struck the northern Mindanao cities of Iligan and Cagayan de Oro, Hataman received direct orders from President Aquino to stop logging in the region.

Logs cut from the forests of Lanao del Sur, a province in ARMM, had made floods that swept the two cities deadlier, pancaking hundreds of people in their shanties.

A logging firm, Mentan, was identified as the operator of the concession from which the killer logs are believed to have come.

As a result of Mr. Aquino's instruction, Hataman issued Executive Order No. 3 which imposed a moratorium on tree cutting/events in private plantations in ARMM.

Hataman, however, said EO 3 was not a blanket ban on tree-cutting in plantations. He said it merely imposes a stricter procedure in the issuance of tree-cutting permits "because we want to make sure the trees are really from private owners and not from our remaining forests."

The inventory, he said, would help authorities identify the source of trees that would be cut in the region.

A previous executive order issued by the President imposed a total ban on logging to natural growth forests, effectively invalidating logging permits that are also known as Industrial Forest Management Agreements.

"The problem is that there is no baseline information about private tree plantations like where these are, the size of these estates and who owned these," Hataman said.

"The most important piece of information is whether the private estate planted with trees belong inside or outside a watershed area. We have repeatedly stressed that the ban on tree-cutting is watershed areas as big as 50,000 hectares for ownership status of the land," he said.

Permits to cut will require clearance from the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office, which, in turn, will investigate if the trees to be cut are really naturally unwatershed.

Tree species would be identified and inorder of the insurgents would help authorities validate the source of logs that are being transported, said the acting governor.

Hataman said previous practice required only reporting by timber producers on the origin of their logs. There has been no independent way to verify the report by timber producers because there has never been any inventory of tree plantations, he said.

Businessmen involved in wood production in Lanao del Sur, in a dialogue with Hataman recently, protested the October ban on tree-cutting, saying this was killing their source of livelihood and depriving jobs.

Hataman said all that wood producers have to do to adjust to the new policy. Ryan B. Rosauro, Inquirer Mindanao

Footage leads to identity of DENR exec killer

By Villamor Visaya Jr.
Inquirer Northern Luzon

TUGUEGARAO CITY—The man who allegedly shot and killed a forestry official in Sanchez Mira, Cagayan, has been identified and charged with murder at the provincial prosecutor's office on Tuesday.

Senior Supt. Allan Ayhaken, Cagayan police director, said Adorable Caligan Jr., alias "Bruce," of Claveria town, was identified through footage from a closed-circuit television (CCTV) camera as the man accused of shooting and killing forestry specialist Melanio Dimain Jr. in Dimain's office on the night of Feb. 7.

Caligan, however, remains at large.

Dimain was killed inside the Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (Cenro) in Sanchez Mira. He was talking with a Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) messenger, Isidro Coronado, past 7 p.m. when the was attacked. Coronado, who witnessed the shooting, was unhurt.

> The mastermind will be known soon. . .

Ayhaken said the CCTV footage taken from two of three cameras at the DENR office helped investigators identify Caligan.

Identified by sister

He said Antonette Balatong (the victim's sister), identified Caligan. He said Balatong had told investigators that she had seen Caligan a few times in Bek barangay in Claveria.

Ayhaken said the identity of the mastermind would be uncovered as soon as a team of members of the Apayt police's criminal investigation and detection group and the provincial and regional police offices gather all leads on the crime.

"The biggest lead, to me, has been job order of as the (victim) was probably set to go back to her office. We have been [trying to identify] the person who called her and asked her to return to her office," Ayhaken said.

He said Balatong [she] told investigators that her sister was already home when she received a call instructing her to return to her office.

Key conversation

Balatong heard Dimain as saying, "Sir sir, you sir, pabalik na ako ng office (I am on my way back to the office)," Ayhaken said.

"A superior (officer, probably) called her as we are having a good bond now. The man-mentioned will be known soon," he said.

The DENR in Cagayan Valley has offered P250,000 as a reward for people who could give information that would lead to the arrest of Caligan.

Benjamin Tomalliam, DENR regional director, said the money was pooled from the representation and travel allowances of DENR employees.

Dimain, the first woman in Cagayan Valley to be designated as forest specialist, earned her post only last month at the Sanchez Mira Cenro.

INQUIRER Southern Luzon

Burias folk struggle for power

By Jocar Calabio Jocbo
Special Inquirer

TROUBLE with Facebook accounts in Claveria, Masbate, reach their friends online only at night, when lampposts are lit from dusk 'til dawn in the quaint town proper that has suffered for years from little or no power supply.

Claveria is the other half of the relatively isolated Burias, one of the three main islands of Masbate province. Electricity is a precious commodity here; residents huddle by candlelight every time a sudden brownout leaves their homes and workplaces in darkness.

Internet in Claveria and its neighbor, San Pascual, even goes beyond the limited absence of light. In the area northernmost municipalities of the province, the inadequacy or absence of electricity has depressed residents, especially school children, of access to and familiarity with advances in information and communication technology from basic computer skills to social networking sites.

For a town with a population of 40,326, there is only one internet cafe and two computer centers. As opposed, it only opens at night and online connection is dependent on the wireless broadband niche provided by telecommunication companies.

Getting online though is the least concern of most youngsters. In the case of poor students whose families do not earn enough to acquire generator sets, diesel fuel comes as choice borrower doing homework at night and risking eyesight, and studying under flickering kerosene lamps.

Claveria is now covered by the National Electrification Administration, as the municipal government produces electricity through diesel-powered generators.

Its pump price of diesel fuel skyrockets along with the cost of transporting it to Burias, the price of electricity has soared to P21 per kilowatt, six rap of the minimum P300 per household consumer.

The municipal government struggles to address the need for electricity. It has few other sources of income aside from the internal revenue allotment (IRA) from the national government.

POWER lines along this road in Claveria, Masbate, are either underused or run cold most of the time because of the power supply problem in the town in the southern tip of Burias Island.

As a result, it can only supply power to the town proper and two neighboring villages every night, from 6 p.m. to 5 a.m. A larger part, or 10 of the 12 barangays, remains without electricity. Most aptly, having electricity was never an empowerment in Bitukinon, Osmeña, Quezon, San Vicente, Tagalib, Alabanza, Canomay, Bora Ingalic, Bajo, Nabuangan, Pajig, San Isidro, Ilihason, Mahabang Bayleng, Imelda, Cawayan, Cajig, Bonga and San Isidro.

Those who cannot afford the one-time their own generator sets, but only at night, time or six rawhands. And to save further, they only switch on a few appliances.

"Low income families cannot afford generators. Instead, they use 'lampara' (kerosene lamps)," says Glenrie Tarpalla, guidance counselor and teacher at San Isidro National High School, 15 kilometers from the town proper.

The situation is the same in the 11 villages of San Pascual. Only nine villages have electricity, tapped for a much shorter duration, from 5 p.m. to 10:30 p.m.

While sharing electricity woes, residents of the two towns hardly see other Claveria and San Pascual are linked by 40 km of muddy potholed road.

San Pascual Mayor Joh Dillard Rivera says students are forced to do their homework at night alongside kerosene lamps. "Reading in dim light strains the eyes. It impairs the capacity to learn," Rivera says.

Another casualty is the chance of residents, especially pupils, to learn basic computer skills.

"In this modern age, computer literacy is a necessity, not a privilege. Computer literacy has been deprived to us because of lack of at least enough electricity," Rivera says.

Unused computers

Rivera says some schools have been provided computers by the government, but these have not been used because of the power supply problem.

Pilot manager resources, schools cannot operate computer sets to power up the computers and other computer-educated, he says.

Aside from severely debilitating education, the lack of power supply is crippling the local economies.

"We are a cattle-producing town but we cannot engage in meat processing because we don't have enough electricity. Even the fishing industry is affected because we have no ice, for instance, from the mainland of Mindoro," Rivera says. Ice is used to extend the shelf life of fish and beef.

Lilo Claveria, 3rd Street, a third-class municipality (annual income: P58 million, P40 million and pop.: 41,726), relies on its IRA and license taxes from fees for schools.

Rivera's entreaties are echoed by Bagalo who laments on the plight of students in San Isidro National High School.

"(The) majority of high school students in San Isidro have no knowledge on computers due to the absence of electricity. They are ignorant even of the basic skills. Even the teachers do not know how to use computers," he says.

San Pascual, however, is more fortunate than Claveria because its power supply and facilities are owned and produced by the San Jose Power Corp. (Sipocor) although the municipal government is still taken care of over by its contractor in the blueprint. But the same contract here causes also the municipal government to squeeze the facilities.

Mayor Ishmael Andrecia says he is planning to buy an additional generator set if funds are available.

Rivera is appealing to President Aquino to look into the "disparity of power supply distribution in the country."

"Rural electrification should be intensified. There can be no real national progress when some areas are left out," he says.

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Sariaya coast haven for rare sea turtles

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
Inquirer Correspondent

THE SHORES of Tayabas Bay in Sariaya town in Quezon have been called "havens of baby sea turtles" after Tuesday's release of 92 Hawksbill sea turtles (Eretmochelys imbricata) in Barangay Guinguinto.

Only last week, 123 Olive Ridley turtle hatchlings were released in nearby Barangay San Roque, Dimosa Amoroy Jr., municipal agriculture officer, said by phone yesterday.

Similar events took place in other coastal villages last year but most were underestimated by the municipal agriculture office, he said.

"The fishermen and coastal villagers were fully aware of the law prohibiting possession and killing of endangered marine species," Amoroy said.

Appendix I of the Convention of International Trade in Endangered Species deems it illegal to import or export turtle products, or to kill, capture or harass them on the face of the "critically endangered."

Republic Act No. 8550 or the Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998 and RA 9147 or the Wildlife Act punish people who fish and take rare and threatened species, and destroy their habitats.

Coastal villagers and owners of several beach resorts are "in solidarity" with the local government in promoting Sariaya as a sea turtle haven. Together with representatives of Tanggol Kalikasan Southern Tagalog and Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), they witnessed how the gentle creatures, locally known as pawikan, crawled toward the bay waters before sunset on Tuesday.

Amoroy cited the efforts of a resort owner, Ilene Panganiban, who received technical help from the local government when he initiated a campaign to protect sea turtles making their eggs to hatch along the coasts for a period of 50 days.

Amoroy urged business establishments along the bay to actively participate in such campaigns as these promote the local government's tourism thrusts.

The Sariaya coastline, host to many beach resorts and other tourist-oriented businesses, serves as sanctuary to turtles that annually come to lay and hatch their eggs from October to December.

Along with the DENR in Quezon, the municipality plans to establish a turtle hatchery similar to Ilaya Beach.

CHILDREN watch baby sea turtles inside a water basin in Sariaya

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Albay to enforce law halting use of plastic

By Mar S. Arguelles
Inquirer Southern Luzon

LEGAZPI CITY—Starting this June, commercial establishments across Albay would be prohibited from using plastic bags, Styrofoam and other synthetic fabrics as packaging materials after an ordinance banning the use of these materials was passed on Tuesday by Sangguniang Panlalawigan (SP).

Signed by Albay Gov. Joey Salceda on July 25, SP Ordinance No. 2012-3 would be strictly enforced and covered supermarkets, grocery outlets, markets, eateries and other stores across the province, a board official said yesterday.

Arnold Imbuenio, provincial board member and chair of the SP committee on environment, said the SP had lifted an exemption on the ban it gave to commercial establishments in the 11 towns and three cities of the province, paving the way for enforcement of the ordinance.

He said the ordinance directs owners of big and small retail chains, including mini-marketers, to stop using plastic, Styrofoam and synthetic materials as packaging bags for goods sold to their customers. Violators face fines ranging from P1,000 to P5,000 and cancellation of their business permits.

Imbuenio said the provincial board is appealing to the public to use bags made of recyclable materials like paper, abaca or buri in shopping.

The SP and other enforcement agencies would meet on Feb. 29 with owners of commercial establishments to discuss salient features of the ordinance.

Environmentalists said the use of plastics, which usually end up as litter and find their way into watercourses, river channels, parks, beaches and streets, causes pollution and results in environmental degradation.

They said once burned, plastic bags contaminate the air with toxic fumes and it would take at least 400 years for the material to decompose as it was nonbiodegradable. Plastic bags also kill animals that ingest them.

Other areas have also passed laws banning the use of plastics although in many cases these laws have hardly been enforced.

Scientists have developed alternatives to plastics made of biodegradable materials but these have not been commercially available to many parts of the country.

FRAIL CONCRETE
Vehicles pass under a pedestrian bridge in Jimalalud, Negros Oriental, after a concrete bridge designed for cars and trucks collapsed at mid-height of the 6.9-magnitude quake that hit parts of Visayas on Feb. 6. Residents of quake-hit areas have been complaining of delays in repair of concrete bridges destroyed or damaged by the quake and their replacement by sturdier modular steel bridges that are easier to assemble.
EDWIN CAMPOS/INQUIRER VISAYAS

Luisita farmers resist move to fence lands

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Farm workers claiming ownership of a 500-hectare land inside Hacienda Luisita in Tarlac City denied provoking tension at the disputed property in Barangay Balibir there on Wednesday.

Rolly Nacpil, chair of Alyansa ng Magbubukid sa Asyenda Luisita (Ambala), said security guards manning the property bought by the Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. (RCBC) inside the sugar estate did not have to fire their guns.

"Why did they have to shoot? We were merely taking out the aluminum roof that they used to fence the area," Nacpil said on Monday. No one was hurt during the confrontation.

Nacpil said farm workers "have every right" to be in the area.

The Hacienda Luisita Inc. (HLI), the company formed by the Cojuangco family and farm workers to manage the stock distribution program, the farm of agrarian reform in the country's largest contiguous sugar estate, denied tampering the confrontation.

"HLI has nothing to do with the supposed 'violence,'" said lawyer Antonio Ligon, HLI spokesperson.

"The property involved is that portion acquired from agricultural to industrial, with (the Department of Agrarian Reform's) participation and acquiescence by (farm workers beneficiaries)," Ligon said. He said the guards are working for RCBC.

Ligon said he called the Lawyer of RCBC to caution the firm that "in trying to put (a) fence [or] implement the writ of (ejectment issued by (the municipal trial court), that they should avoid any untoward incident because we don't want (HLI's name dragged into the controversy)."

Nacpil said HLI promised for land conversion in 1980, and sold the land to a company named Isuzu, which pulled out in 2004 on the heels of a strike by workers and farm workers.

The second buyer, Ligon, interrupted the property as RCBC for P549 million. RCBC took the land when Lipco defaulted on its payments, he said.

Ambala questioned the presence of soldiers in areas near the property. The Army has returned detachments to some of villages in Tarlac City as result of the return of communist rebels.

A national alliance of urban poor groups assailed the Cojuangco family and President Aquino for tension in the sugar estate.

"It may not be surprising if [President] Aquino will once again prefer to invoke his silence [on this issue], even if the lives of the farmers are at stake," said Gloria Arellano, head of Kalipunan ng Damayang Mahihirap.

The Supreme Court recently ordered the distribution of lands in the Cojuangco-owned estate, setting a showdown between relatives of the President and farmers demanding the lands be distributed to them for free. (Jeoffrey Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon)

Dictionary of their language a fitting gift for Ibalois

BAGUIO CITY—Members of the city's Ibaloi community will receive their best gift ever on Ibaloi Day today (Feb. 23): an unabridged, scholarly dictionary of their language which many fear is on the verge of extinction.

HOMETOWN *Snapshot*

The Ibaloi dictionary and grammar is a 703-page book published by the Cordillera Studies Center (CSC) of the University of the Philippines Baguio and Institute for Indigenous Health and Cultural Competence Training, Education, Networking and Governance Inc. (IHeng).

For decades, Ibaloi elders, like linguist Estrella Pungayan, have studied hard to preserve the Ibaloi language because younger generations are unable to understand or speak it.

In the book, Dr. Ryan Lobiano, IHeng executive director, writes that "no language is immune to extinction. The rigor of a language depends less on the number of its speakers than how they ... love it."

The dictionary was the product of 4R years of research by scholars led by Dr. Lobiano.

Ballard worked closely with the late Chairman Ameda of Kabayan, Socrates Tiqui of Mankayan, and Florante Abon of Buguias, all in Benguet.

According to the CSC, Ballard used to live in Kabayan with his family from 1974 to 1986 when he started the project. The work was resumed in the 1990s when he helped Tiqui translate an Ibaloi Bible. They collected 71,000 typed Ibaloi definitions on cards."

The last phase of the project started in 2006 when Ballard was urged by Lobiano to complete a standard dictionary.

During this period, Ibaloi was taught mainly in language classes sponsored by Pungayan, who also published manuals about the language.

In the book, Ballard describes Ibaloi as "one of the most complex inflected languages in the Austronesian family [of languages]. The inventory of Ibaloi words could never be exhausted, so deep and rich are they," he says.

The Ibaloi language uses 33 letters, including "ch." Ballard says that Ibaloi as spoken in Benguet is "very powerful" because it uses synonyms and metaphors. So an Ibaloi speaker highlights a point while displaying his or her competence "to a pleasing and effective way," he says. (Inquirer Cabinet, Inquirer Northern Luzon)

HIGHLIGHT Benguet gather in the capital town of La Trinidad for the 2010 celebration of Ading, a festival celebrating the founding anniversary of the province.
LYN RILLON/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

Man, 70, dead after setting fire to wasp nest in house

By Jhoanna Magallanes
Inquirer Visayas

DUMAGUETE CITY—A 70-year-old man in a mountain village here died in a fire that he started to stop wasps from building a nest in his house, authorities said.

Alfonso Lopez, who suffered severe burns, was trying to burn away wasps that were building a nest in his house in Barangay Bulong which were made of light materials.

According to Timoteo Gobrey, village councilor, Lopez was alone at home when he lit a pile of leaves, hoping that the smoke from the burning leaves would drive the wasps away.

The wasps had been building a nest on a bamboo wall of the house. The fire that Lopez started, however, grew and started to burn the wall, according to Gobrey.

Lopez tried to put the fire out as neighbors shouted at him urging him to flee his burning house.

The 70-year-old man, however, didn't immediately flee as he tried to carry food with him.

Lopez suffered burns on his stomach with severe burns on the back just seconds his trained home.

The village was so remote that firemen failed to reach the burning house hours after the fire started.

Gobrey said the husband Lopez, who was known to have difficulty walking as a result of old age, stepped on his way out of his burning house.

Gobrey quoted son of Lopez's son, Teruby, as saying that P25,000 Lopez was saving was burned, too.

The city has been hit by a series of fires in recent days, mostly by razing poor communities.

Millions of pesos have been lost to property rather in the fires, which also have city officials busy dealing with worthwhile concerns.

Kidapawan cop chief, deputy sacked after jail attack

KIDAPAWAN CITY—This city's police chief and his deputy were relieved following an attack on the city jail that left one dead, the killing of three people and the wounding of several others in urban authorities said was an attempt to spring a former Moro guerrilla being held in the jail.

Chief Inspector Ulysses Manchuria, city police chief, and his deputy, Senior Insp. Rafael Dillera, according to North Cotabato Gov. Emmylou Taliño-Mendoza.

Mendoza said the relief was ordered by Senior Supt. Conso Inobinas, police chief of North Cotabato.

The governor quoted the provincial police chief as saying police officers and their commander as he complained despite the existence of intelligence reports warning of an attack on the jail by followers of Datukan Ismael, alias Commander Lumikmon, a former ranking Moro guerrilla leader who surrendered to the government.

"They have been remiss in their duties," said Mendoza. The governor, however, did not identify the sacked officers' replacements.

Gunmen attacked the jail past 8:30 p.m. last Saturday using rocket propelled grenades and assault rifles.

A driver of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and two prisoners reportedly were killed while 13 other persons were wounded, including jail guards and five officers.

ICRC condemned the attack. "It's ironic that the people who are out to help area lives during conflict are the ones being killed. Let's do something to stop this," said Allison Lopez, ICRC media coordinator.

It was not known if there were casualties on the side of the gunmen, who failed to flush inmates in their bid to free Ismael. Ismael was arrested in Cotabato City on Dec. 23 and detained here in connection with several criminal cases that he is facing in regional trial courts in North Cotabato.

Ismael is facing multiple murder, highway robbery, extortion and kidnapping cases among many other criminal charges that are pending in court, according to Senior Insp. Elias Tamdon, town police chief of Pikit.

Tamdan described Ismael as "slippery" who had eluded several local police Task Groups City and Mamasapano in the province during an operation against wanted men last December.

Tamdan said Ismael is also involved in the kidnapping of a Germ man national in North Cotabato three years ago. He did not identify the victim or the German national.

Ismael is also a member of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), said Ismael is not a member of the MILF which is currently in negotiations for a peace deal with government.

Al Haq said the gunmen who attacked the jail to a bid to spring Ismael are not MILF members, too.

"These are purely lawless elements who have no connection, directly or indirectly, with the organization," Al-Haq said. (Charlie C. Belmonte and Jeoffrey Maitem, Inquirer Mindanao)

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OPINION

Yellow over Inclined: inquirer.opinion@gmail.com/@inq7opinion

Wisdom, not legality

EDITORIAL

IF ATTENTIVE observers of the developments at the Senate impeachment court are appalled to discover that Chief Justice Renato Corona and his wife enjoyed VIP perks from Philippine Airlines while the company had a case pending at the Supreme Court, and are naturally eager to learn more, what are they to make of a ruling by the court rejecting the PAL executive personnel by the prosecution to testify on the matter? Should they not be wondering why someone who can credibly be described as a competent witness would be deemed irrelevant to the case?

But that was exactly how Senate President Juan Ponce Enrile ruled on Tuesday, leading to an early adjournment. Initially sorry, the court's presiding officer went on to full-fledged annoyance and showed out the prosecution for supposedly being careless, reckless and undisciplined in its allegations. For good measure, he assailed the lead prosecutor, Iloilo Rep. Niel Tupas Jr., for not properly learning "the art of pleading" and issued the grim warning that he should not be pushed into ordering what could at this point be facetiously termed as a fate worse than death: that the articles of impeachment be sent back to the House of Representatives for amendments.

If the flight privileges purportedly enjoyed by Corona and his wife during a pending case involving PAL cannot be considered covered by Article 3 of the impeachment complaint, which accuses the Chief Justice of betrayal of public trust for, among others, "failing to meet the stringent standards" of competence, integrity, probity and independence that the Constitution requires of members of the Judiciary, what's the complained nonlawyer to do?

According to Enrile, bribery, which was "the tendency of the evidence" that the prosecution was presenting, should have been properly raised in Article 3. He insisted at Tupas' insistence that "technicalities cannot be allowed to prevail" in the trial, and invoked the court's "very, very liberal" stance as a means of declaring that it had been bending over backward to accommodate the prosecution's weary ways. And thus did Day 21 of the trial conclude, with fundamental questions—for example: Did the Chief Justice fail the test of integrity by accepting flight privileges from an airline involved in a pending case at the Supreme Court?—again left unanswered by the rite of a legal sentence that would not even allow the questions to be posed in open court. (That the Coronas enjoyed tickets to and from various countries through PAL platinum cards was nevertheless allowed to be read into the records. But it is not certain whether this would be subject to the senator-judges' deliberations.)

Almost a month into the trial, the political-legal circumstance that is the impeachment court continues to confound. *Sui generis* it may be, but more often than not its supposed core of a kind-senior takes on the dimensions of a criminal court, with the defense so ably led by Serafin Cuevas running to the Supreme Court, the very turf of the accused, for restraints. Yet it is particularly imperative for this impeachment case to be resolved in the satisfaction of the people as they march, as the poet said, "in the darkness with a great bundle of grief." It involves the Chief Justice, after all, who, in an ideal world, is the paragon of integrity, wisdom and honor—else how can he lead the institution that, even only by its name, should command the people's respect? It is imperative for the people to see that in this violently imperfect world, even the supposed avatar of virtue can be removed if he is shown to be less than forthright in sworn documents and impervious to the stringent demands of his post.

The point bears repeating: The people's representatives are duty-bound to protect the national interest, which necessarily includes a judiciary beyond reproach, a judiciary imbued with, simply, in the words of Cesar T. Virol, dean emeritus of the University of San Agustin College of Law, "moral authority, high public esteem, independence and autonomy, and legitimate power to decide." In discussing the "political question" resurrected in impeachment, Virol was clear: "It is said to be one which the Constitution left to the sound discretion of the legislature, over which the courts have no jurisdiction." This includes, he said, issues "concerned with the wisdom, not with the legality, of a particular act or measure, to be decided by the people in their sovereign capacity..."

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The algorithm of kindness

PUBLIC LIVES

Randy David

ASH WEDNESDAY, the beginning of Lent, calls on the faithful in our predominantly Christian nation to perform acts of kindness and sacrifice for the less fortunate. They are the poor who are forced to live with little hope in our highly unequal society. They are the sick obliged not by law to suffer a slow debilitating death. Or they may be the momentarily lucky, forced by circumstance to turn to friends, kin and strangers for help. The call to perform kind acts is one of humanity's hardest tests.

Many of us fail this test because, relentless we are aware of it or not, we seldom give without expecting something in return—recognition, a reward, or repayment in loyalty and favors. In short, there remains the underlying stain of an conditional love, and I have always believed this is what Christianity is about. "When you give something to the poor," he tells his disciples, "do not have it trumpeted before you, as do those who want to be seen in the synagogues and in the streets in order to be praised by the people. I assure you, they have already been paid in full." (Matthew 6:2) This may as well have been addressed to our politicians who think that a good deed has value only when it is trumpeted with their names and faces.

But the world is filled with kind Samaritans. They emerge out of nowhere, as if to remind the rest of us of the obligations of our humanity. One such person was 44-year-old Rick Barrameda of California, whose selfless offer last year to donate one of his kidneys to anyone who needed it set off a chain of 30 operations involving 36 living donors and 10 grateful recipients of healthy kidneys. The donors and recipients remained anonymous until New York Times reporter Kevin Sack stumbled upon this inspiring story and tracked down the individuals who formed this amazing chain of need and altruism. (Sack's article may be accessed at http://www.nytimes.com/2012/02/19/health/first-of-its-kind-domino-kidney-transplant-chain-is-complete.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0)

Barrameda is not a crusty fellow; although that was what the staff of Riverside Community Hospital initially suspected he might be when he presented himself as a kidney donor with no particular recipient in mind, and, more importantly, with no expectation of compensation or recognition. He was subjected to psychological screening and months of tests to determine not only his mental fitness but also his suitability as a donor. The hospital's transplant coordinator pushed him about his motivations and warned him about the extreme risks (transient) dryly told him: "People think it's so cold that I'm donating a kidney. I think it's so cold that they think it's so cold."

Barrameda's explained what prompted him to do it. He said he was not a saint. He had not even donated blood in the past. But something hit him when one day he learned that the receptionist at his yoga club had donated a kidney to a lady friend she happened to meet at a shopping mall.

Mrs. Barrameda vehemently objected to the whole idea, and threatened to leave him. But, undeterred, he explained to her why it was important to him and what great benefit it would bring to society and to their three children. He swore he'd be behind to nurse him after his kidney was taken out. That too is love.

Barrameda's kidney travelled across the United States to be transplanted into the body of a 66-year-old man in a New Jersey hospital who had been suffering from end-stage renal disease. A niece of the patient had volunteered to give him one of her kidneys but her blood type was not compatible with his. So, in exchange for the kidney her uncle was receiving, she agreed to donate hers to a woman in Wisconsin whose former boyfriend, David Mahrdt, had offered to donate one of his kidneys. Mahrdt's former boyfriend, in turn, went to James Dzurick in Pittsburgh, whose husband, Shaun, gave his kidney to Mustafa Barbir, a young father in San Diego. Barbir' donor's kidney in turn went to somebody else in the chain.

This roundabout way of matching donors with recipients is made necessary by the fact that the kidney of a willing donor, perhaps a relative or a friend, may often not be the best match for the intended recipient. In the United States, where federal law strictly prohibits the sale of organs, this situation has given rise to the phenomenon of paired exchanges, which the law allows. Pairs offer an extremely restricted supply of kidneys. But stitching together available pairs into a longer chain enlarges the pool. The algorithms and logistical requirements of such a scheme are formidable but not insurmountable.

This is where the Samaritan wisdom of Saint Hildegarde is. Her young daughter had fallen victim to a congenital kidney ailment, and she needed a transplant. Neither his nor his wife's kidney proved suitable for the child. As they mourn her children's daughter die, a distant relative came forward to offer one of his kidneys, and it was a perfect match. But the thought of finding a more methodical approach to the problem never left Hil. On his own, he worked on an algorithm that took into account a number of the factors he had to screen for in the list searches for various strains of anonymous donors and patients. He contacted transplant hospitals all over the United States and urged them to join his National Kidney Registry. A web of interlinked donors and recipients, held in place by a mix of kindness and self-interest, has resulted from this effort. More lives have been saved by the graciousness of others.

All it took to start this intricate web was a few act of kindness, unconditional and pure.

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People power

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

SOMEONE ASKED me why I've thrown my support behind Filipe's public indictment of Renato Corona and call for the people to voice their sentiments through some kind of People Power when there's an impeachment going on.

Put it simply and succinctly.

First because like Filipe, or like most Filipinos, I've grown frustrated by the pace and shape of the proceedings. The impeachment court began by recognizing fundamental premises. One was that it was not an ordinary court or a court of law. It wasn't merely that an impeachment court is an extraordinary court assembled to do an extraordinary thing, which is to try an extraordinary official. It was also, looking at it from another angle, that the senator-judges were not lawyers—or at least most of them were not so. They were not supposed to talk like lawyers, they were not supposed to act like lawyers, they were not supposed to look at things like lawyers. They were supposed to talk and act and look at things the way we, the citizens, did.

Two, which bolstered that understanding, was that the court existed only to reveal the truth, to uncover the truth, to bring the truth to the light of day. That was to be the guiding spirit of the trial. Prosecution agreed so, defense agreed so, even Retired Justice Corona agreed so. The point is that we have been seeing the parties now to keep us more convinced.

Then before you know it, defense had managed to prevent the court from talking about Corona's ill-gotten wealth because the prosecution had failed to specify that explicitly in its articles of impeachment. You can't talk about Corona lying through his teeth about his SALN's unless it's properly notable.

Before you know it, defense had managed to prevent the court from opening Corona's dollar accounts because the prosecution had failed to specify that explicitly in its articles of impeachment. You can't talk about Corona lying through his teeth about his SALN's unless it's properly notable.

Before you know it, defense had managed to prevent the court from opening Corona's dollar deposits on par with privacy in one's own home—it was absolute, said Miriam Defensor Santiago—mind only the mind-bending "colonial mentality," as we likewise call it, it

perpetuates. What earthly, or hellish, reason makes peso-peso owner and dollars-in-hand in Bart Bunot? The corrupt are more likely to hold peso than dollar accounts? You want an unpredictable crisis, there is an impeachable crime: Trampling on the flag, and the senator-judges who voted for the Supreme Court's TRO are guilty of it.

I've been here you know it, everyone was calling the lawyers, acting like lawyers, leading to things like lawyers. No longer demanding that the truth be the home that pulled the tent of law or whatever it would take it; agreeing instead that the law be the home to drag along the court of truth whenever it felt like it.

I sympathize with P'Boy's impatience. I empathize with P'Boy's dismay. I support his call for the people to do something about it.

Second because no one else is something about it. We have People Power, whose anniversary we mark this February, whose spirit we need badly to rekindle today.

Is it bypassing the impeachment? Is it sowing the impeachment?

Not at all.

At the very least, defense itself isn't confining its defense to the impeachment court. After complaining against "trial by publicity," it went on to declare some version of it, accusing P'Boy on the strength of the word of an unknown source of lying to bribe off the senator-judges. As it turned out, the unseen judges acted inferior of the TRO. So what did that mean? It was really the senators in the Hannibal Lecter mask who did the bribing? Defense got off very lightly with the cheap shot.

At the very most, People Power does not contradict representative democracy. It complements it. People Power does not diminish representative democracy, it replenishes it.

It was Juan Ponce Enrile who talked about representative democracy at the beginning of Corona's trial. He prior was for the public to learn the basics of how the people govern. We are a representative democracy, he said, we have them to do the job for us.

But really, in a real representative democracy the people do not disappear after elections, the people do not go into outside of elections. They are part of the fabric of everyday governance. They participate fully in everyday political life. They do that by way of public opinion, which shapes policies and decisions as powerfully, if not more so, as what the secretaries, the legislators and, the justices themselves do. Where they say they still write their congressmen, they do not expect to be ignored. They expect their congressmen to listen. When they pay their taxes, they expect their taxes to go back to them, it is their money after all, and not to be shrouded in opacity by officials. When they vote for officials, they believe vaguely if not completely unthinkingly, they expect that official to look away in shame, if not shoot himself in the head, they do not expect that official to be a pathological liar.

Then, what "representative democracy" is this, where we don't even have the right to speak up, if not in shame, at least in silence. After voting, the people get out of their officials' way "by writing your congressman and say others it gets you.

People Power has always been our way of making up for that. Although we've never had to, only to date extenuating. I've always thought People Power would evolve into something akin to the way the citizens of truly democratic countries are able to be heard in everyday life. Not that's another story for the future, we do have another date extremely to our hands. But in the absence of this country's at stake in the drama unfolding before us today. We cannot afford to be mere spectators to it. We can do something about it.

We are the people, we have the power.

Did P-Noy order CJ bank-records' theft?

OUTLOOK

Rigoberto Tiglao

THAT PRESIDENT Aquino ordered the theft of Chief Justice Renato Corona's bank records has emerged as a distinct possibility if it was in fact an Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC) operative who presented the documents.

"If you understand the procedure the AMLC's work is, only and only the president or his known alter ego can dare ask somebody there to get confidential bank records for him, and justify it as part of 'his crusade against corruption'," a veteran official of the Bangko Sentral told me in Malapitan. "A bureaucrat won't risk his career and even a jail term—unless it is a very popular president who asked him to do so," he added.

Pilipinas, a subsidiary of Mercobank, the country's biggest bank, has nationwide an extensive investigative, even contracting foreign security and handwriting experts, to find out the source of the leak of Corona's signature card. The bank's conclusion: It was a BSP examiner deputized as an AMLC operative who turned over the secret info. Malapitan investor branch records who photocopied Corona's signature card when he was a part of an audit team in 2010.

The BSP was too quick to deny the allegation, and didn't even examine the controversial signature cards submitted by the prosecution panel. The BSP claimed its examiner named Jerry Uol, who was with its Anti-Money Laundering Specialist Group, had only asked the bank to comply with the BSP's policy of "conducting enhanced measures on 'politically exposed persons' (PEP)...defined as those 'in prominent public positions'"...after discovering that Chief Justice Renato Corona and a few other depositors were not in its PEP list.

Pilipinas Bank branch manager Arabelle Dungon however testified under oath in the trial that the AMLC operative did access Corona's signature card, and may have even photocopied it.

That's the things gets available to the Pilipinas officials' view.

Then the photocopy of Corona's alleged signature card had the PEP notation, handwritten and underlined. However, the actual signature card presented by the bank did not have such notation.

Consider now that the BSP statement claimed that the sole reason caused by its AMLC-deputized examiner was that the bank's computer program didn't tag Corona to PEP list. The only conclusion would be that the BSP examiner put the notation "PEP" on a photocopy of Corona's signature card, and on several other signature cards, as her way of telling the bank that these depositors, whose card he marked as such, should be included in the bank's PEP list. It was his "professional" way of doing it.

Unfortunately for the BSP examiner and the rest of Corona cohort, especially for congressmen Tey Umali and Jorge Banal who disseminated admitted possession of the stolen photocopies of the signature card, that "PEP" notation has become the smoking-gun evidence in source, in the way police use "marked money" to set up blackmailers or extortionists.

Second, the BSP claimed that its examiner had only found Corona was a depositor only when a bank official informed him that the Chief Justice was in P1 million in a bank suffle in 2008. But that is exactly how the prosecutors alleged they learned that Corona had bank accounts—and even their numbers—in Pilipinas. That is unprepared, bungling prosecution was able to unearth on its own the fact that Corona was a suffle bank in 2008—which a corollary pointed in the banners—is incredible.

And third, the photocopied signature card of the prosecution had no entries after 2010, an incontrovertible evidence that it was photocopied only that year, which was during the BSP audit.

The BSP noted that its "regular examination of the 'books' was from October 2010 to December 2010, "long before the impeachment trial," implying that the probe could have no connection at all to Corona's prosecution.

This however raises more, very annoying questions. Is it really in a democratic government of, for, President Aquino announced to the world he trained Corona out, in July 2010, Liberal Party president and losing vice presidential candidate Mar Roxas filed his electoral protest at the Presidential Electoral Tribunal? Much of the Supreme Court, by October that year, Malacañang realized that the Corona-led Court would strike down his flagship project, the Truth Commission, as unconstitutional. In August 18, Corona ordered total acquittal in the Supreme Court on the Hacienda Luisita issue, a signal that the Chief Justice will not hesitate under the Cojuangco clan's demands.

It's just too coincidental, even inexplicable that out of a 200 branches, it was the bank's Katipunan branch in Quezon City—known to be mainly by the anti-Corona based crowd there—which the AMLC decided to probe. Why not in branches in the nearby Cubao area and even Chinatown, which would be the most suspect as money laundering depositories? Or even in Forbes Park, which is known for the loyal branch for Cojuangcos to bank with, as his known residence was in Kamuning Village, just a stone's throw away?

The inescapable question: Given Mr. Aquino's less than deep respect for the rule of law and his obsession to remove Corona, did he order as that time the theft of his bank records, with the aim of that of blackmailing him out of office, or if he refused to step down, to present them in an impeachment trial? Or was the theft and photocopying of the signature card planted in his suffle bank in Katipunan in Congress, whether the reason for their inexplicable but now distinctly brilliantly confidence?

For the President of the Republic to break the law for personal gain is the height of betrayal of public trust. I hope the Senate Justice to search to truth.

The first step would be to put that AMLC operative under the witness stand.

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Icing on the cake

I WAS in the fourth grade when I decided to be a lawyer like the late Sen. Jovito Salonga. He was my idol.

It has been 15 years since then, and that dream is still a dream. In 2010, I took the Law Aptitude Exam (LAE) of the University of the Philippines College of Law and flunked it. I was not really expecting to pass it given my mediocre grades, but somehow, I hoped for a miracle, for me to make it to the Top 200.

But contrary to what Actress Nora Aunor said in the past, there are no miracles...but divine intervention, I believed by hard work.

My classmates and I had looked forward to taking the LAE primarily because we were told that we had to go to Cebu. Before our batch, there was no testing center in Iloilo City; the only one in the Visayas was in Cebu.

I loved to travel, as my main goal was to get to Cebu. Taking the LAE was just the icing on the cake.

My classmates and I informed our parents of the expenses and they were more than willing to give us what we needed. We were excited. We believed when it was announced that there would be a testing center in Iloilo, and that the trip to Cebu had been cancelled.

But when, in 2011, I heard that there was only one testing center for LAE 2012 and that it would be in Diliman, Quezon City, I was shocked...not really because I had to shoulder the expenses myself, but because I had always wanted to be a lawyer and needed to take the exam.

Their chance to study in one of the country's prestigious law schools would depend on money, and just for the testing fee has also be anther. They would need an allowance for their daily needs during their stay in Diliman—an expensive prospect, I think, for a daughter whose father is earning a minimum wage.

I realized what a setback I was. The LAE was just the icing on the cake for me, but it was the core of other people's dreams. It may make or break them, but for me, it was just one of the exams I had to take.

I want to be a lawyer because I have been up to no one; I was 10, and people called me "attorney." Others become a lawyer to help their community. For me, it means living to serve. For others, it means fighting for their rights.

I remember some people I met in past misdemeanors. They asked me to help them after I become a lawyer. Their only source of help was me, and I'm willing to help them. I can only help but feel guilty for becoming a slave of my unwisdom.

I still want to be a lawyer. That has not changed. I just need time to evaluate what I really want to do with my life.

But this luxury of having able to think of what one really wants to do is not enjoyed by many people. And maybe having only one law testing center in the country has its good intents. I just don't see how it was benefit people from faraway places who cannot afford to fly to Manila at the but of an eyelash.

Nadeine N. Gadlos, 23, is a political science economics graduate of UP Visayas.

YOUNG BLOOD

Nadeine N. Gadlos

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twenty-something and below.—Ed.

'Medicare portability' for Fil-Ams

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

IT IS supposed to be a win-win situation, with both the United States and the Philippine governments benefiting from it, but most of all, the 10 million American Medicare beneficiaries who have established brand-name medicines.

Many Fil-Am retirees, medical professionals and advocates in the US have joined the "US Medicare in the Philippines Campaign" to convince the US Congress and President Obama to allow US Medicare coverage in the Philippines. They are lobbying for the passage of the US Medicare Portability Bill. Their campaign cry: "Bring Medicare Home! Sacrificed it!"

If during your entire career you had contributed to a government health insurance fund and upon retirement you want to avail of medical care, wouldn't you want to choose where to go? The land of their birth or the first choice of many US Asians.

According to proponents of the Medicare Portability bill, US-Philippine professionals are saving at the rate of $100 per day. They are part of the daily "tsunami" of 10,000 baby boomers who are reaching 65 years of age. Under US law, they can take their benefits to any country anywhere in the world, but their Medicare coverage, unlike private medical insurance coverage, cannot be applied abroad, not even to their homeland where they are also citizens.

There is a stage of lives when they say, "One, deeds of thousands of Filipino doctors, nurses, medical professionals, teachers and workers immigrated in the 90s, '00s and '10s upon the invitation of US medical and educational institutions and hospitals to meet the needs of the American people. With decades of work they have paid into Medicare, they deserve portability of benefits as internationally accredited hospitals and care professionals in the Philippines.

This will not be a drain on the US budget, they argue, but will in fact be a part of the solution to the worsening budget crisis. Here's how: "The current annual cost per benefit rate is US$11,743. The savings from the Medicare portability bill is US$5,000 per year for each Filipino American retiree who chooses to return to his/her country of birth and avail of quality health care there.

"With this current savings of about $5,000 to three choose to reside in the Philippines, the Medicare savings would be US$1 billion per year. This dramatic savings could help meet our US government's commitments in job creation, education, infrastructure and small businesses, or reduce the budget deficit," Health care in the Philippines is affordable.

The goal in 2013 is a change in the US laws that would allow—for a start—for three demonstration hospitals in the Philippines that meet international standards to be established after Medicare benefits can be accessed there.

This is far from saying that medical care in the US is inferior. Many wealthy Filipinos with health problems go to the US for treatment. What in dollar$ spend—such as their open-heart surgery in the US has costs less and think they would live happy, healthier and longer lives in Philippines, my Philippines." The Department of Tourism's "It's more fun in the Philippines" campaign and its medical tourism program could get a boost from this.

Three days ago I spoke with Ate Lachica, prominent Fil-American retired lobbyist and organizer of US Medicare Philippines (www.USMedicare2012.org), a non-profit advocacy group based in Washington DC. Lachica spent nearly $1 million of his own pay their due. A political science graduate of the University of Southern California and vocal of a Fil-Am World War II veteran, Lachica worked 17 years for the passage of the 9% law Veterans Equity bill that resulted in the payout of $5000 and back pay for Fil-Am vets and their families.

The Medicare Portability bill lobbyist has been meeting with governmental officials in the US and the Philippines, President Aquino among them. Last November Lachica was invited to the White House breakfast with President Obama at the White House.

According to Lachica, the campaign has been making progress with Vilay and Foreign Secretary Albert del Rosario. He said that last January the President instructed that he will discuss this issue with President Obama in their June meeting.

Philippine hospitals that have signed up as partners are The Medical City, Cebu's Chong Hua Hospital and Cebu Doctors Hospital. There are ongoing negotiations with Davao Medical Center, St. Luke's Hospital, Makati Medical Center and Cardinal Santos Hospital.

Last week Lachica was in Davao in meet with Congresswoman Shahlee Sarenas Mendoza who will be introducing a bill for the Medicare coverage for its patient hospital services in the Philippines.

On the Philippine side, we should be ready for this luxury "tsunami" of retirees who are expected to experience first-class health care. Filipino caregiving is first-class and world-class. Many have already have state-of-the-art facilities and medical experts galore. Unknown to many, foreigners are coming to seek treatment here and also enjoy the sights and sounds.

I imagine the retirement and nursing homes are will love in the Philippine landscape. But I've visited one that caters mainly to Japanese retirees and I liked what I saw. There should be room of this kind.

Not all of our nursing graduates can be absorbed abroad. Not all of them are raring to toil on foreign soil if they can help it. I believe that the Philippines has a lot to offer to fellow Asians who have the means to live and enjoy their golden years here. Filipinos are world-class hosts. And who now wants to come home to the bosom of the land they love, to bask in its golden sun, to gaze at its blue seas and skies and the verdant hills beyond.

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo is a columnist of the Inquirer. E-mail feedback to mmo@philmail.com *or* mmo@inquirer.com

Lighting the 'Dark Continent'

WORLD VIEW

Adnan Amin, Achim Steiner and Kandeh Yumkella

SABUNDI—19TH CENTURY explorers called Africa the "Dark Continent," because to them it was vast and largely unknown. Today, stories may still be dark, but for a very different reason: it is dramatically short of electricity. Indeed, nocturnal satellite images show that, except for some pockets of southern and northern Africa, it barely twinkles.

The United Nations has designated 2012 the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All, in effort to reach in Africa this month with the "switch on" the continent as a whole. The goal is to jump-start global efforts towards that goal, thereby enhancing the lives and livelihoods of millions of people.

Progress have been made before to electrify Africa, with mixed results. But this time can be different. Many countries are already testing the technologies and policies needed to bring energy to rural areas and growing cities. Innovation in consumer electronics and digital technology is harnessing and benefiting even the renewable energy technologies, including wind, advanced biomass, and solar power, are essential to unlocking the continent's potential.

Africa's leaders in technologies are tapping the country's geothermal energy resources, adding hundreds of megawatts of generating capacity in recent years. Kenya is also about to begin construction of sub-Saharan Africa's largest wind farm.

Ethiopia has announced plans to develop some 30GW of hydro—or $11.5 billion—by 2015, moving to the solar thermal project in Kom Ombo and a 200 megawatt onshore wind farm in the Gulf of Suez.

In Morocco, the government of solar photovoltaic has to include efficiency has helped to raise access rates to electricity to rural areas from less than 35 percent in 1990 to more than 97 percent in 2009. The country has been chosen as the first location to develop a 500-MW concentrated solar plant as part of the Desertec Industrial Initiative.

Instead of waiting for a grid to come to a remote village, renewable energies can be tackle decentralized to remote areas. Distributed generation is ing renewables can also help to reduce the risk of massive power outages and resulting reliance on expensive diesel power, which currently can cost up to 2 percent of a country's annual GDP—a problem that affects 30 of the 48 countries in sub-Saharan Africa.

Innovative schemes are underway in parts of Africa, for example, mobile phone companies have begun piloting ways to provide customers access to solar energy. Electricity is supplied on a pay-as-you-go basis and used to charge fully, unlocking further opportunities for isolated farmers.

But more is needed. Africa is endowed with vast untapped renewable energy resources that can provide electricity for all at an affordable cost. The potential of solar power alone is more than 1,000 gigawatts, or more than five times the country's current total installed generating capacity. The potential output of solar energy is 10 times higher, in excess of 10,000 GW, while only 3 percent of the region's potential hydropower resources are so far been exploited. In parts of Africa, sustainably developed biomass could provide feed-to-raise in meeting growing demand for transportation fuels.

With Africa having yet to build nearly two-thirds of the additional capacity that it will need by 2030, the continent faces a unique opportunity to benefit from recent advances and cost reductions in renewable power-generation technologies, thereby leapfrogging the energy path taken by industrialized countries.

The story is not limited to electrification. In Ghana, an African Rural Energy Enterprise Development project, supported by the UN Foundation, has helped small entrepreneurs to scale up and supply 50,000 homes with cleaner, more efficient cooking stoves, while generating manufacturing and service jobs and earning Kenth-Averaging resources to boom. There are similar across across Africa—and, again, significant need for further investment.

The International Year of Sustainable Energy for All coincides with the year of the Rio+20 Summit, when world leaders, marking 20 years since the Earth Summit of 1992, paved the way towards sustainable development. It will meet again to address the goal. One cooperative decision that world leaders can take when they meet again in Rio de Janeiro is to reduce or phase out the more than $500 billion of global fossil fuel subsidies that benefit only a fraction of the world's people, less than one-tenth of the poorest 20 percent of the world's population.

It will be a challenge, but a gradual, well designed, and properly communicated set of policies and measures to reform energy subsidies, alongside measures of energy, a good place to start is the poll. In order, promulgated by governments and local authorities can play an important role in shifting consumption towards cleaner forms of energy, building the momentum for change. Ultimately, however, the most important step for some African countries would also help to realize Africa's potential for sustainable energy production.

Many countries remain, but today they are no longer insurmountable barriers. Governments, the private sector and civil society groups in Africa and beyond should support UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's initiative, by nurturing the new generation of entrepreneurs and innovators who will bring light to Africa's dark continent—and more than just the lights on.

Project Syndicate

Adnan Amin is director general of the International Renewable Energy Agency. Achim Steiner is executive director of the UN Environment Program. Kandeh Yumkella is director general of the UN Industrial Development Organization.

'Lawyerhood'

Kotch Agcaoili Agudo

MY FIRST birthday as a lawyer came recent. No one, my family celebrates my birthday every 12th day of January, does not matter. I was remember our father's passing. One day I thank God for another year of my wonderful life, five days later, I wasn't him for taking away someone who could have completed it.

My father was already married to my mother—meaning, he had a family to feed, and children to play with—and was a government employee when he took up Law. He took the bar exam in 1989. He was one of the few who passed it but, perhaps, the only one who never knew he did.

Before the bar results were released, he disappeared. Months passed before he was found floating in Cagayan River. I was three years old then. I did not understand the concept of death, but I knew I lost a father. All my family said how painfully it has turned his career as a lawyer even before it could begin. Among my grandfather, never cried during my father's wake. But he cried the entire day, holding a newspaper that carried the bar exams results, with my father's name on it.

My case is second justice. Or justice were found to. No one was imprisoned, no one was filed, there were no suspects. His murder was, in a sense, a perfect crime. Twenty-three long years have passed since then. In our case, justice is no longer delayed, it has long been denied.

So we decided "to put justice in our own hands." Out of three in our family, two of us—my sister and me—are currently in law school. I sometimes wonder why I persist despite the lengthy reading assignments, everyday recitations and the uncertainty of passing each subject. Then I think about my father, about his dream, his tragic death, and the elusive justice that continues to haunt our family. I am pursuing law because I believe that somewhere, somehow in our justice system, I can still find justice for my father and our family.

Lately though, with our justice system engulfed in controversy, I have begun to harbor doubts about my search for justice. Many of us who are justice-deprived take comfort in the idea that our judiciary is the most trustworthy of our government institutions. Although I still believe that there are many honest judges, I also believe that people will be surprised and that they use their conscience and level light in deciding cases. This is the third, and one thing to this view.

So the suspension against Chief Justice Renato Corona disappointed us. They only fanned our fears that the 33 years of hoping for justice for my father may all be a futile endeavor.

The weeks now, the entire nation has watched the impeachment trial of Chief Justice Corona. We are impressed with the brilliance lawyers are exhibiting in arguing their case. We have seen how our senator-judges deal with issues presented before them. The impeachment trial will tell us the quality of our senators and how they view their role as important as in the impeachment process. The impeachment trial against Chief Justice Corona will be a showcase on how justice is administered in our country.

It is wrong to presume that when people question the Chief Justice's integrity and sense of fairness, they are in effect attacking the entire justice system. Let us not make things worse by making false conclusions. Our justice system is not lost. It's only hope that we can find justice for my father by seeing to it that justice is served equally to one and all.

Kotch Agcaoili Agudo, 26, is a 2010 cum laude *Bachelor of Laws student at Ateneo de Davao University.*

Not all dollar accounts in banks are confidential

LETTERS

A CLOSER scrutiny of Republic Act 6426 would reveal that not all dollar accounts of all banks are covered by its secrecy provisions as found in Section 8 thereof—"Secrecy Of Foreign Currency Deposits." Here, that data secrecy provision only mentions "Authority to examine foreign currency deposits," its application to the latest instance "Supreme solicitor exclusion allowing (the) express consents of one person, thing or correspondence implies the exclusion of all unlisted, other bank accounts that are not in the names of depositors are deemed exclusions from the protection of this particular provisions.

It is a common banking practice that, in addition to an original deposit, most banks offers other higher yielding products and services to its clients. For instance, Metrobank's website shows that as of Dec. 31, 2011, its savings deposit rate is 0.125% while its time deposit rate is 0.25%. Other banks offer similar rates.

Contrary to the misinformed belief of the Philippine public, and in some cases, even of a "broker" that collects a fee from the clients. Upon the end of the term, the government—not the bank—pays the monetary value of the bond or the deposit.

Moreover, Sec. 9 of RA 6426 provides that only "deposits under this act shall be insured under the provisions of RA 3591 (Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation). Thus, investment entities be insured with the PDIC.

Being different from a "deposit," an "investment" falls outside the mantle of protection of the bank secrecy law and can be legally inquired into without violating the bank secrecy law.

—LITO SIGUA,
San Murillo, Quezon City

SENATOR Santiago listening a prosecutor during an impeachment hearing

Santiago's behavior in impeachment trial questioned

THE SUB-committee on the privilege and contempt of Minister Santiago at the impeachment trial. Where she took a private prosecutor to task and reprimanded him for what she termed "unhappy" little did anyone realize she meant to do a solid expel and expressed exercise to keep their mouth silent. For she is responsible senator envy talking to and listening to herself to much she probably thinks she is the only person she can have a same and intelligent conversation with. Then, when one prosecutor tried to ask her, he should have seen it coming. "How dare you argue with me!"

After some hours due to high blood pressure (thank God for it), or maybe, Santiago sprained with more battles and debacle. She was starving like a raging bull...and did anyone notice those dagger stares? She berated (the prosecutors legally) for not honoring the presidency verbal oath to interpret her steps should be real cause for alarm. Lucky for us she wore a tent as a judge like the Supreme Court justices. Imagine what she would have said had she not: "Who's going to be the judge of the propriety of (her) attorney?" That's what she said of our very own Supreme Court where she may indeed want to run for in search of a new chief justice!

While in the backwards, she will be the egregious representation of all the Filipinos "criminal" and on country has to suffer the world. Let's all cross our fingers and earnestly pray she will not make a bizarre spectacle of herself there as she does so relentlessly here already all the time. Shame, shame, shame has to be the Philippines"!

—ESPERIDIÓN MENDAÑO,
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Wanted: 'Mortensens' in our midst

I RECENTLY read the story of Greg Mortenson, an American mountaineer who, in 1993, lost his way coming down from K2, the second highest peak in the world, and found himself lodged in poor people in a village called Korphe. The people were Muslims. In gratitude he promised to build for them a school. And, indeed, even after he has built schools for poor villages in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

On Sept. 14, 2003, just three days after the infamous 9/11 attack, Saad Abbas, a student, delivered a speech during the inauguration of a school he built in Bhutanese in Hamilla, North Waziristan. Here is an excerpt from Abbas' speech: "We share in the sorrow as people weep and suffer in America today as we imagine a bloodshed. Those who have committed this evil act against the innocents, the women and children, as cruel thousands of widows and orphans, do not do so in the name of Islam. By the grace of Allah the Almighty may justice be served upon them."

Let us pray therefore to look into our hearts and see that the great majority of us are not terrorists, but good and simple people. Our land is stricken with poverty because we are without education. But today, another candle of knowledge may be lighted in the name of Allah the Almighty, may it light our way out of the darkness we find ourselves in."

The Muslims in Mindanao do not act like the Muslims in Pakistan and the majority of us, Muslim and Christian people in Mindanao because we lived and they are "without education." I am telling you this story hoping that in it we can find some threads to help us achieve peace in Mindanao. And the time is: Build schools.

I visited the official website of the Department of Education for the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. According to its statistics, as of 2006, there was a need for 3,604 classrooms in the entire region. And for that year there were 1,260 classrooms "to be built." There were no reports, however, if they were ever built. In another website page, there is a report of 2,344 new class. But 2010, the target number of classrooms is to be built was 214. Assuming that the population has grown since 2006, those 214 new classrooms are greatly insufficient. The DepEd website also revealed the cost of constructing all these classrooms about which I will say nothing anymore. You can check them for yourself.

It would seem that DepEd cannot build all these needed classrooms. Perhaps Mindanao Muslims might need people like Mortenson to help them. Afghanistan not be "Mortenson" in our midst?

One more to this aspect of our national life we can see that point to the work of peace as well as solidarity. Our Muslim brothers have a right to knowledge, culture and education. Experts will agree that educating them will lead to their development, which Pope Paul VI once said is the new name for peace.

—FR. OSCELIO, MSC/SVD,
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How buses 'travel' like speedboats

IN THE CCTV videos of organized incidents in just the past few months, buses speeding along the South Superhighway in heavy rain were shown beginning to drift out of control, some side-swiping to a straight line without braking. Recently, the Bus Incident, the southern highway bus line "terminal as in Manila driveways by the wind." In the second bus's drive by driving a 2KG lane, the operator was driving at 80 kph when he had just undergone a retraining course, and the accident was "only because the road was slippery."

Most buses are already aware of the need to slow down when a light shower starts and bring to the surface light oil stains that make the road slippery (remember, only few are aware of the phenomenon of "hydroplaning"—wherein tires, though they may be treated new and simply prepared, lift on the water's surface and completely lose contact with the road when the vehicle is being driven at medium to high speeds in moderate or heavy rain.

All bus drivers should be given a refreshing course complete with instructions on how tires are lifted by a thin depth of rain water as highway speeds and begin avoiding as water like a spontaneous interval of a land vehicle with full road contact. The course should emphasize the need to slow down in rainy weather or when encountering wet roads, and to inspect tires regularly to ensure they are adequately inflated and have adequate tread depth. Bus companies will agree that enforcing these will lead to their development, which Pope Paul VI once said is the new name for peace.

—EDUARDO E. SEVILLA,
bmjamia2011@yahoo.com

Resignation in PH and elsewhere: A study in contrast

"AFTER THE developments during the past days and weeks, I realized that my credibility has been diminished and that it is no longer possible for me to perform the job as president."

These were the words of Dr. Christian Wulff who resigned on Feb. 17, 2012, as president of the Federal Republic of Germany, a purely ceremonial job.

Wulff has been the subject of criticisms after the media found out and reported that he received favors from wealthy and influential friends when he was prime minister of the Federal State of Lower Saxony.

He denied the allegations of impropriety despite the growing number of allegations that were being aired in the powerful and influential German media. His popularity sank even deeper than that of the Christian Federal foreign minister who was forced to give up the leadership of his party and as vice federal chancellor in the coalition government, and never became the more unpopular politician here.

When the justice department said that it intended to apply for the removal of his immunity from being charged in court, Wulff resigned. Critics were relieved, saying that his resignation saved the country from the issue of what could be a lengthy trial.

Wulff confessed that he made "serious mistakes" in his dealings that has been spotlight. Wulff is the second president to resign in that country. His predecessor was forced to relinquish his job after making comments which were heavily criticized by the press.

This is Germany where leaders take responsibility for things they should be real cause for alarm. Lucky for us she wore a tent as a judge like the Supreme Court justices. Imagine what she would have said had she not: "Who's going to be the judge of the propriety of (her) attorney?" That's what she said of our very own Supreme Court where she may indeed want to run for in search of a new chief justice!

While in the backwards, she will be the egregious representation of all the Filipinos "criminal" and on country has to suffer the world. Let's all cross our fingers and earnestly pray she will not make a bizarre spectacle of herself there as she does so relentlessly here already all the time. Shame, shame, shame has to be the Philippines"!

—ESPERIDIÓN MENDAÑO,
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US suit tags 2 Pagcor officials

From page A1

had casually told his lawyer—one of Okada's staffers—that he wanted to surprise his wife with a Chanel bag and was introduced to Ford one delivered to his room later on.

"I was there to meet officials of Wynn Resorts and Mr. Okada was the vice chairman of Wynn," Noguisi said in an interview with the bureau. "Maybe the staffer was just trying to impress his guests. In any case, I had the bag returned immediately."

The allegation about Noguisi receiving the bag in return for favors to Okada—an investor in Pagcor's $4-billion Solaire casino City project—was contained in a report prepared by a former Federal Bureau of Investigation director, Louis Freeh.

The investigation was commissioned by Wynn Resorts, whose owner has had a public falling out with Okada, his former partner.

"To the victim of a bounced check goes the benefit of the doubt," Noguisi said, adding that he is being used by one side or another since against the other. "This is a fight between giants."

US lawsuit

Okada was accused on Tuesday in a US lawsuit of paying off Philippine regulators and throwing his powerful Las Vegas partner, Wynn Resorts chief executive Steve Wynn.

In the lawsuit, Wynn Resorts said Okada, a director of Wynn, went behind the company's back to develop business for his own Universal Entertainment group in the Philippines and broke US laws in foreign bribery.

Wynn said Okada's group more than $130,000 to curry favor with two Philippine officials in apparent violation of the US Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, jeopardizing Wynn's own reputation in the process.

"Mr. Okada, his associates and companies appear to have engaged in a longstanding pressure of making payments and gifts to his vice chief gaming regulators at Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp., who directly oversees and regulates Mr. Okada's provincial franchise agreement to operate in that country," the lawsuit said.

The suit, filed in a Las Vegas district court, said Okada had sought to guarantee Wynn's billing law not to do so, it named Noguisi, former Pagcor chair Efraim Genuino and chief Santiago, as the recipients of the payoffs, which it described as "bribes."

Okada told a Wynn investigator that he had paid for Genuino's trip to the 2008 Beijing Olympics, Wynn said.

Wife, kids, runny

The suit alleged that Noguisi, his wife, three children, nanny and company officials had a five-day trip to Wynn's Macau resort in 2009 during which Okada met with the Pagcor chair to discuss his Manila casino operations.

Okada's Universal Entertainment broke ground for its Manila bay Resorts casino on Jan. 26, promising more than 2,000 guest rooms in three hotels, with the planned opening in the first half of 2014. Universal, through Aruze USA, was one of four winners of provisional gaming licenses awarded by the Philippine government in 2008.

The Japanese gambling tycoon allegedly ordered that Noguisi be given the most expensive accommodations at the resort—a $6,000-a-night villa normally reserved for high rollers—as well as one of the casino's best tables.

More than $50,000 was spent on Noguisi's visit, including about $20,000 in cash given to the Filipino delegation for shopping and gaming, the suit alleged.

Noguisi also requested and received a Chanel designer bag worth 15,000 Macau patacas ($1,875) for his wife, according to the suit.

Malicious

Noguisi—a friend of Pres-dent Aquino who was actively involved in the 2010 presidential campaign—decried the reports about him in the foreign media as "malicious."

Noguisi said that the probe report which mentioned his name as part of the Chanel bag issue was quoted liberally by foreign journalists, while excluding the footnote at the bottom of the page—it, this point—which mentioned that he did, in fact, return the bag.

He said he received reports that at least one of Wynn's publications had called the journalists whom they felt did not praise on the Chanel bag issue enough.

Free accommodations

Noguisi did admit, however, that he enjoyed free accommodations at Wynn Resorts when he went to Macau during that visit which was provided by his host.

He disputed the $6,000-a-night price tag ascribed to the hotel room, saying the patience he spent he stayed in had an published rates as it was used only to accommodate the resort's VIP guests.

"You can't book that room as a walk-in guest even if you wanted to," he said. "So I don't know how they got that figure."

The Pagcor chief said it was standard operation procedure in the hospitality industry to provide free accommodations to people invited to engage in official business with their hosts.

"Even in the Philippines, when we invite guests, we shoulder their accommodations. Or, we assign a car to bring them around and we assign a 24-hour security detail to them if they are VIPs," he said.

He said he had not received any compensation during that trip, Noguisi said.

He added that he never received the $20,000 expenses supposedly credited to his visit by his hosts, adding that this may have been credited to his room or his suites, possibly used to acquire the Chanel bag.

'Fight it out'

Noguisi said he had briefed Malacañang officials about the issue and that he had been advised to "fight it out" if he believed that he did not do anything wrong.

Malacañang expressed confidence that Noguisi would be able to clear his name.

"[The point really here is, did he benefit personally?" presidential spokesperson Edwin Lacierda told reporters as he reminded the Palace stand that it did not see anything wrong with Noguisi's acceptance of hotel accommodations from Wynn Resorts as it was industry practice and aimed ones for the government.

Lacierda confirmed that Noguisi had arranged a meeting between President Aquino and Steve Wynn but it did not push through. The aborted meeting had to do with a possible business investment, according to Lacierda.

PAGCOR CITY A Cadillac construction is in full swing at Bagong Sayong Pilipino Entertainment City in Manila, a gaming complex that is envisioned by government officials to become Las Vegas-style casinos.

LOOK WHO'S LEFT HOLDING THE BAG Pagcor chair Cristina Noguisi answers questions from the media during Wednesday's interview at his Pagcor office in Hyatt Hotel in Makati, Manila. Yes, he got a Chanel bag but returned it promptly.

PHOTOS shows the signage of Wynn Resorts Ltd. in Macau. The owner of the Wynn Macau casino has accused its former director, Japanese gambling tycoon Kazuo Okada of paying off Philippine regulators in his bid to build a big gaming resort in Manila.

Former Pagcor chair denies getting gifts from Okada

By Marlon Ramos

FORMER Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor) chair Efraim Genuino reiterated the accusations of US casino operator Wynn Resorts Ltd. that he and two other bribed from a Japanese gambling mogul when he was still at the helm of the state-run gaming firm.

Speaking through his lawyer Romeo Capuyan, Genuino said he did not receive any entitlements owned by Japanese casino tycoon Steve Wynn during the period that Kazuo Okada purportedly provided travel and hotel accommodations to Pagcor officials.

"He has not gone out of the country since 2008, according to him. The records of the BI (Bureau of Immigration) will bear him out," Capuyan told reporters.

Asked if Genuino received other gifts from Okada, he said: "Nothing. He did not receive anything."

He said if the former Pagcor chair got any favors from Okada, it was made through "reciprocal arrangements of one nature or another."

"Every the Palace is now downplaying that fact. The Palace says there's nothing wrong with reciprocal arrangements," Capuyan said.

Deputy Presidential Spokesperson said it was Pagcor chair Cristina Noguisi Jr., that holding another position in the government-owned gaming firm, who visited the Wynn casino in Las Vegas in 2008 along with other Pagcor officials.

Interestingly, Okada's Aruze Corp. was the source of 3,000 sacks of donated rice which were purportedly distributed to victims of the typhoon Ondoy in Metro Manila.

Instead of being distributed to typhoon victims, the donated rice was supposedly repacked into smaller 1-kilogram sacks printed with the names and faces of Erwin and Jinggoy Estrada, who lands amid the catchphrase "Ang Bagong Maldar" (The New Pare) as their campaign slogan.

The repacked rice was then allegedly distributed to Las Piñas, Laguna provinces, and Makati City to aid the story and lists of Genuino's sons.

Erwin, a former Pagcor consultant, lost the mayoral race in Makati City to his pal Binay son of then Mayor and now Vice President Jejomar Binay.

Erwin's younger brother, Jackassy, won in Las Piñas, amid allegations that he was not a resident of the town.

"There's nothing wrong with that. There are many business people who want to inform the President that they are bullish about the Philippines," Lacierda said. "This is not a special case."

Lacierda said Noguisi was not running to build a Pagcor City that was not purely for gambling but also one that would provide entertainment to families.

Pagcor vice president Francis Saturnino said Wynn Resorts would not adversely affect Okada's plans for Manila. "It's full steam ahead as far as its execution is concerned," he said.

A member of the Nasue committee on justice and antiterrorism recommended Noguisi's dismissal on recommendation made previously by Okada to Pagcor officials.

"Pagcor is just collateral damage in the corporate dispute between Okada and his partners at Wynn Resorts. I think the reason should settle their dispute before anyone should even be dragged into it," Basilan Rep. Rep. Dumarao said in a text message.

Latest step

The suit was the latest step in the acrimonious fight between Steve Wynn and his longtime partner Okada. On Sunday, Wynn's board voted to force out Okada, who controls a 20-per-cent stake in the company, which owns casinos in Las Vegas and Macau.

The board also moved to redeem Okada's 24 million shares at a 38-percent discount and purchase its 20 years, held through Aruze USA Inc., a Universal subsidiary.

In a statement on Sunday, Universal branded the board's action outrageous, saying the investigation had been rushed. "Universal Entertainment will not allow Wynn Resorts to pursue its investment and prevent a forced redemption of its shares," it said.

$135-M donation

The row between Wynn and Okada burst into the public spotlight in January, when the Hong Kong-based businessman used Wynn, intending to gain access to records in rescinding a $135 million donation the company made to the University of Utah.

Okada, Wynn Resorts' largest shareholder, used Wynn Resorts in January by denying him information about the donation, which he called "inappropriate."

The US Securities and Exchange Commission is looking informally into the issue. MBS reports from AFP, Reuters, Chrislino O. Avendaño and Cid C. Cabuenyan

Celebrate Edsa I with gratitude to God, Church urges people

From page A1

the celebration for their own motives ... but I hope as a people, it's about time that we think about what it could bring in terms of the economic good, development and giving people hope," said Cebu Archbishop Jose Palma, president of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP).

"Where we look back and rejoice that we have used freedom without bloodshed, we should thank the Lord," Palma said in an interview over Church radio Radyo Inter yesterday.

The 2000 Edsa Revolution anniversary comes at a time when the nation is divided over the ongoing impeachment trial of Chief Justice Renato Corona for betrayal of public trust, improper disclosure of his statements of assets, liabilities and net worth (SALN) and other charges.

Corona and President Aquino have also been engaged in an ugly word war using public forums as venues. The exchange prompted senators and bishops to call on the two leaders of coequal branches of government to exercise prudence and proper decorum.

Edsa activities, theme

The Edsa People Power Commission (EPPC), chaired by Executive Secretary Paquito Ochoa Jr., has come up with a series of activities for the celebration in Metro Manila, Tres Marrites City (Ilgan City) and Batangas province on Feb. 25.

Its theme, "Edsa 20: Aking Tayo. Mr. Bata Ito Pilipinas Nacin?" is a call to action for all Filipinos to participate in actual building while the activities will highlight the spirit of volunteerism and bayanihan.

The President will host the flag-raising rites at the People Power Monument, the track-named "Lakbayan" on Edsa. Expected to join him are Vice President Jejomar Binay, former President Fidel Ramos, riches, Metropolitan Manila Development Authority Chair Francis Tolentino, Metro Manila mayors and EPPC commissioners.

In the afternoon, Mr. Aquino will be in Tres Marrites to turn over 21,000 houses to soldiers. According to the EPPC, this event is symbolic of the partnership of the military and civilians during the Edsa Revolution.

God's will

Archbishop Palma said Edsa showed the Filipinos' obedience to God's will and perseverance to become united.

But he lamented that while the country was able to topple a dictatorship and achieve freedom, the people did not use violent revolution, which other countries tried to emulate, had yet to learn from 24 years after.

"Today, we are free as we claim, but that freedom has not yet instilled in (other) life," Palma said. "The challenge today is how do we use this freedom to achieve genuine blessings? How do we use this freedom to develop the meaning where people live in the most humane (condition)?"

"I would say Edsa should not responsible one of such freedom," he added.

In a recent speech commemorating the Edsa Revolution at La Consolacion College in Manila, Mr. Aquino categorized for the removal of Corona, saying: "Would Jose de la Cruz allow himself to be left out in the process? Are we going to allow only a few to decide for all of us?"

"The question in the end is one simple: Can we still trust Mr. Corona?" the President said during the first of a series of events to mark the anniversary of the civilian-backed military uprising.

For his part, Corona challenged Senator Ejercito Estrada, his own SALN, bank and purported psychological records of his mental capacity to govern.

LGU programs

In Mandaluyong, Executive Secretary Ochoa issued Memorandum Circular No. 27, ordering all government officials and employees to take part in the Edsa anniversary activities.

The circular also directed all departments, agencies and instrumentalities of the national government, including government corporations, and local government units, to extend assistance to organizers of the programs and activities.

Ochoa said he was encouraging those in creative their own events, including holding lectures, film showings and community service "and help make this a day of remembrance."

In Ilgan City, more than 200 houses will be distributed to victims of Tropical Storm "Sendong," which devastated Northern Mindanao on Dec. 16 last year.

Ilgan has in the city will be capped by a concert featuring popular artists, led by Gigi d'Alessio, and an EPPC commissioner, who endorsements per form before the evacuees and the relief aid volunteers.

Ardina 3 shots off in Kuala Lumpur Open

SPORTS

Editor Teddyvic S. Melendres
Assistant Editor Francis T.J. Ortuoste

Alabang surprise Interclub leader

By Mhaveg B. Cuerillo

DASMA—Getting a huge lift from a quartet of battle-tested teenage club dependents, Alabang scored 864 points at Ruenbos Palms bowlers here yesterday and emerged the surprise leader after the first round of the PAL Interclub's Men's championship division.

Santiago Lorenzo marshaled a three-over-par 75 worth 33 points and Miguel Ilhan and Ishy Andres Sandoval contributed 32 and 31, respectively, as Alabang scrambled on top with a one-point edge over Del Monte and Cebu Country Club.

The 16-year-old Santiago Lorenzo tied three birdies against six bogeys at the well-manicured, up-and-down Palms' bowler layout, with his 13-year-old brother Raul counting four for Alabang with 30.

Del Monte was shaky in opening defense of the title it won on home ground last year while Cebu CC drew a combined 66 points from Gab Singzon and Joely Bayani Garcia as both teams suffered 11th.

Leonard Lobrones, Julius Basanez and pro-bound Jhunry Abaya, the winner of the ICTSI Tour's qualifying leg a couple of days back at THE Filipinas in Laguna, each scored 31 points for Del Monte with playing captain Virgilio Feliso just a point off as the team's last scorer for the day.

Nagai piled up 34, Garcia added 32 and rogue Carl Almario was good for 29 for UCC. Eldine Joven Nisi, a lawyer, and Marlon Sarmiento 28 points counted as the fourth score.

While it came as a surprise to most that Alabang was in the lead, skipper Ariel Pasay, who led the squad to the Interclub title last year, said the team played near to form.

Meanwhile, Nilack Nikah, which was reshuffled along with Negros and Dover Hills to the lower Stranden division after an 11th-hour appeal, took a share of the lead with Orchard after posting 117 points built around Tomoya Shimizu and Yumiko de Jesus' identical 32s.

Elphege Wong fired 28 and either 27s of Mr Lopez and John Cobing counted for Wack Wack.

King Arthurnie led Orchard with 31 with Phil Che shooting 30, and 59-ites Rapsod and Ace Sobrevas surviving for 29 and 27.

In Friendship play at 4pm, HLAu Hawaii got 30 points from Ha Varnes for an opening HLAwaii 2-point lead over UP Tee Jans.

Tee scores
Championship
UP—Aldeza 32-Cato, Del Mirto 30-Ripin Santiago 31-Ha Varnes/Arbolado 29-Tan Jansen
Standard
UP—Orchard, Wack Wack 117, Old Orana, 60-Tan Ok-Negros, Cavalry 88, Mo Ilocs, Ala Ilocs,
Friendship
HLAu Hawaii 30 UP Tee Jans, 29-CHRIS

LEONARDO Lobrones of Del Monte follows the flight of his ball.

2-day sports summit to tackle wider athletes base

By Marc Anthony Reyes

AFTER a debacle, it's either a revamp or sports summit that comes next.

This time, focus will be on the sports summit which the Philippine Sports Commission will host starting today and tomorrow in the Rizal Sports Stadium and comes two months after the country's worst campaign in the Southeast Asian Games in Indonesia.

Executive Secretary Paquito Ochoa is expected to grace the event in behalf of President Aquino, who had ordered sports heads to re-prioritize the PSC's limited resources only for sports with strong potential in international competitions.

PSC chair Richie Garcia said the summit will try to find ways to "widen the base of athletes" and discover new and younger talents. Also in the agenda is the plan to establish regional training centers in "deserving" sports development areas.

Philippine Olympic Committee president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco Jr. said the summit will also tackle the partnership between private corporations and government in promoting sports.

Involved during the two-day affair are Department of Interior and Local Government Sec. Jesse Robredo, Education Sec. Armin Luistro, LGU officials, sports coordinators and representatives from Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao.

Garcia will present the PSC policy directions in partnership with the LGUs regarding its grassroots programs, the Sports-for-All program and the establishment of a 2012 calendar each international sports event throughout the year.

Luistro will focus on the 2012 Palaro, Batang Pinoy which the DepEd annually stages and will be held this summer in Pangasinan.

Palaro back in Lingayen after 17 years

By Marc Anthony Reyes

AFTER 17 years, Palarong Pambansa is going back to Lingayen, Pangasinan.

The Department of Education has awarded the hosting of the annual talent search for public elementary and high school students to the town which staged the Palaro in 1995 during the term of former President Fidel V. Ramos, who hails from Asingan, Pangasinan.

The Palaro will be staged on May 6-13 at the Narciso Ramos Sports and Civic Center.

Several other venues are being prepared, including the Virgen delaGracia University foundation in San Carlos City, an Olympic-size swimming pool in Tangcaran City and a multi-purpose sports arena in Urdaneta City.

Though the organization will be handled by the DepEd, the Philippine Sports Commission said it will play an active role in the staging of the event by lending technical expertise and providing sports equipment.

Lingayen host Mayor Marlyn Cruz Desamito Mendoza said Lingayen in Palarong host during a building boom last two years.

The Palaro is held in Luzon every other year, while Mindanao and Visayas take their turn every two years.

Bulacan tops gymnastics competitions

BIÑAN, Laguna—Defending overall champion Bulacan finally made its presence felt by dominating the gymnastics competitions of the 2012 Central Luzon Regional Athletic Association (CLRAA) on Wednesday.

The seven pieces of country Jasmine Sison came alive with the gold-medal performances of Jenny Ann Calleja and Christine Faith Tayman, who were the gold medals each to native Bulacan's surge.

Over at the sprawling Jamboree Sports Center, 15-year-old striker Jean Kristi Bondoc was on target all meeting and topped four gold medals to join the growing list of multiple gold-medal winners in this year's CLRAA Jamboree is hosting the five-day event in 18 years, thanks to the efforts of Gov. Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. and Provincial Sports Rep. Ace Cesar Ebdane.

Competing in the secondary girls' artistic gymnastics, Calleja rised the individual all-around (35.00), vault (12.30), balance beam (11.35) and floor exercise (11.35).

Tayman ruled the individual all-around (36.96), rope (11.40), hoop (14.90) and ball (14.60) in the secondary girls' rhythmic gymnastics.

Their fifth gold medals came in the team events.

Sisenna Nalnas and Mary Jane Bonita accounted for two golds each to the five gold haul in the elementary girls rhythmic, while the boys' team in the secondary artistic gymnastics and Jim Vinny Dalad in the 3km exercise of the elementary boys artistic gymnastics capped the 17 gold medals the Bulacan team banded for the day.

BARE-FOOTED runners join the track and field competitions.

Tiu shows might again

MULTI-TITLED Jonathan Tiu of JCTMotorSports Racing sparkled anew to post his second straight victory yesterday in the kickoff of the 2012 Philippine Drag Racing Championships Southern Luzon leg at the Batangas Racing Circuit Drag Strip in Nasugbu, Batangas.

TIU

The six-time national champ were outgunned on his teammate Anthony Tiu failed to suit up in their finals showdown due to mechanical problems, handing the outright victory in the Quick 8 division.

Defending champion Mervin Manuel of JCTMotorSports, who was banned out by Tiu in the semifinals, took third place after turning back TU Lanning at Speedworks in the event sponsored by Yokohama, Mobil Race Master, HRD Motor Oil and powered by Racing Boss@Shaw 89-1.

Manuel spoiled Tiu's bid for a victory double by bagging the 2000 Pro-stock.

Spectators were looking forward to an exciting duel, but it did not happen as Tiu committed a red light violation while Manuel zoomed to the finish line clocking 12.021 seconds.

RACING TIPS
By TOP CHOICE
#1 Score Area Pure

Race 1—(0.571)—Golden Boy, #10, Abel Jose (L) Carole Ann, #6, Mallon (L)
Race 2—(0.571)—Golden Boy, #10, Abel Jose (L) Carole Ann, #6, Mallon (L)
Race 3—(0.571)—Golden Boy, #10, Abel Jose (L) Carole Ann, #6, Mallon (L)
Race 4—(0.571)—Golden Boy, #10, Abel Jose (L) Carole Ann, #6, Mallon (L)
Race 5—(0.571)—Golden Boy, #10, Abel Jose (L) Carole Ann, #6, Mallon (L)
Race 6—(0.571)—Golden Boy, #10, Abel Jose (L) Carole Ann, #6, Mallon (L)
Race 7—(0.571)—Golden Boy, #10, Abel Jose (L) Carole Ann, #6, Mallon (L)
Race 8—(0.571)—Golden Boy, #10, Abel Jose (L) Carole Ann, #6, Mallon (L)
Race 9—(0.571)—Golden Boy, #10, Abel Jose (L) Carole Ann, #6, Mallon (L)
Race 10—(0.571)—Golden Boy, #10, Abel Jose (L) Carole Ann, #6, Mallon (L)

NFGB Super Big Event blasts off

THOUSANDS of cockfight enthusiasts converge today at the Ynares Sports Coliseum in the "NFGB Super Big Event 6-Cock Derby" unfolds at 1 p.m.

Seeing action for the first time after winning the 2012 World Slasher Cup are Rep. Rodolfo and Rep. Lani Mercado, who will field anew Sir Sentel Bilatong Asul.

Gov. Eddie Ilarg Plaza, record holder of 11 straight wins in the 2011 Bulakan, is also among the favorites.

Challenging them are Cesy Gamos, Ramon Maravenas, Al Garcia, Gregory Arquero, Sonny Lagos, Rico Hizon, Dr. Dodoy Gabin, Mone Gaves, Vic Gov. Odie Sinatra, Tony Sy, Pedro Belmes, Mayor Jesy Palmares, Ed Arellano, Bong Jocos, Allan Claus, Edsel Dy, Mernardo Molano, Charlie Sy, Mayor Jomar Glores, Boy Gamos, Ben Hernandez, Gov. Alcalde Cabanatuan, Gov. Jaypee Suarez, Tino Perez, Mayor Juancho Aguirre, Gov. Dada Pingris, Jon Beltran, Rolly Sentino, Sarel Sarmiento, Frank Villegas, Gene Samard, JC Ilagan, Mokee Alimario and Mayor Jo Santos.

Bigger PBA role eyed for second Smart Gilas PH team

By Jose Mesiona

THE PHILIPPINE Basketball Association will be an integral part of the next batch of Gilas Pilipinas national team.

Smart Gilas Pilipinas operations manager Butch Antonio yesterday said the coaching staff headed by newly named national assistant Chot Reyes will sit down soon with PBA commissioner Chito Salud to determine the extent of the pro league's involvement with the PH five.

PBA chair Manuel Mendoza has committed to form a 14-man pool from the league to strengthen the Smart Gilas program in its campaign to secure a slot in the 2014 Fiba World Championship in Spain.

"Hopefully we could iron up with commissioner Salud right after their Dubai trip to get a clearer picture of how the PBA will come in to help the cause," said Antonio.

Rain Or Shine collides with Barako Bull today in Dubai before taking on Brunei's Gilas tomorrow before an expected official record of OPVs at the Al Shabab Club.

Antonio said Reyes, on his second tour of duty with the Nationals, will form the core of his coaching staff prior to the selection of Smart Gilas players.

Several players from the collegiate ranks, which Antonio referred to as the "under group," will join the PBA stars in the pool for the Asian Games contenders.

"It's more exciting now because smart groups and rookies are participating," said Antonio.

Smart Gilas Utd. bowled up by three PBA players and a naturalized center Marcus Douthit, placed fourth last year in the 65th Asia Championship in Pechon, China, and missed the chance to qualify to the London Olympics this year.

Antonio said that the under group would come from Shaq Pilgrina, a bunch of college players who brought home the gold medal in the 2012 Southeast Asian Games in Indonesia.

A number of former Fiba players would also be asked to represent PH first in preparation for the 2013 Fiba Asia Championship where three continental slots in the world championship are at stake.

Reyes, whose team of PBA stars finished fourth in the 2007 Fiba Asia Championship, will get valuable inputs from some of the best coaching minds in the pro league and amateur ranks—Alfrancis Pido Tenorio, Nicolas Antonio Bert Lao Gholitho and Atoy Co's Nestor Torres.

"Unlike last year where we still had to approach the PBA and asked for some of their players, this time, they're the ones offering help and were very thankful for the gesture," said Antonio.

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Ateneo halts La Salle run in UAAP volley finals

By Cedelf P. Tapao

ATENEO finally figured out a way to stop La Salle's homicidal attack and put the UAAP women's volleyball finals on equal terms.

The Lady Eagles rallied past the unbeaten Lady Archers, 23-25, 20-25, 25-23, 25-17, yesterday to reduce the finals into a two-for-two affair at the PhilSports Arena in San Juan.

The Lady Eagles proved resilient on defense while turning to the trio of Angeline Gervacio, Pille Caughey and Alyssa Valdez on attack in key stretches to break the Lady Archers' first love of the season.

"Deserved ba? Sunod-sunod ang panalo nila, eh? Sabi ko nga, kailangan nilang mag-step up. Kailangan nilang ipakita sa amin na deserve nila 'yung championship," said Ateneo coach Roger Gorayeb in Filipino. "This is just our encouragement and we're very encouraged to even the series."

La Salle, which finished the eliminations round with a 14-0 card, has a better-to-best edge in the finals. The Lady Archers need to win twice while the Lady Eagles need to win the last to nail the crown.

Earlier, the Taranees U-secured on the verge of a sweep volleyball success after repulsing La Salle, 25-23, 25-19, 25-20, 20-24, 16-14 in their own best-of-three series.

Joy-R Librodo finished with 20 points to lead the Taranees.

The Lady Archers have not lost to the Lady Eagles in more than four years and posted a perfect 14-0 record in the eliminations round that gives them a three-to-two edge in the finals.

Meanwhile, National University and Ateneo begin their best-of-three series for the season 7-0 basketball title today at the Rizal Memorial Basketball Stadium.

LEBRON James (left) of the Miami Heat puts up a jumper against Tyreke Evans of the Sacramento Kings.

Searing Heat bench burns down Kings

MIAMI—Miami's reserves entered in a critical late-game stretch to hand the Heat their seventh consecutive victory with a 116-108 home win over the Sacramento Kings on Tuesday.

Following three tight quarters, the evil Heat bench duo reserves during a 13-2 run early in the fourth that gave them a 106-92 edge and a clear path to their latest triumph.

The team's bench scored all but two points during the game-breaking stretch, and finished with 52 for the game, to add a game-high 30 points and 13 assists from Dwyane Wade.

The frustrated Trail Blazers, meanwhile, handed the San Antonio Spurs their worst defeat in 10 years, 137-97.

Wade had the crowd on their feet in the second quarter after a spectacular play that saw LeBron James block a shot then lob a near full-court pass to the guard, who caught it in mid-air and finished it.

"He did some nice things in spurts and stretches," Heat coach Erik Spoelstra told reporters.

"You do have to give the Kings credit, they played very well. They pushed us (here until the very end."

Chris Bosh added 20 and 10 rebounds and James chipped in 18 points to find 500th leading Heat (50-7), who have now clinched their seventh playoff berth in 12 years.

The struggling Kings (18-39), who were without the injured John Salmons (hip), have now lost six straight.

Isaiah Thomas put up a team-high 24 points and Marcus Thornton finished with 23 for Sacramento, which took a six-point lead after the first quarter but fell behind late in the second and had to play catch up the rest of the way.

"We had to play a perfect game to win this against this team and we were pretty close to a perfect game," said Sacramento coach Keith Smart.

"We had moments but when you give up 29 points off turnovers, you are only going to beat many teams."

COMPLETE NBA RESULTS: Cleveland 103, Detroit 100; Atlanta 119, Boston 108; Charlotte 97, Milwaukee 92; Indiana 105, Philadelphia 76; Houston 110, San Antonio 81.

Caligdong, Gier still doubtful for Malaysia tiff

By Cedelf P. Tapao

PHILIPPINE Azkals co-captain Chieffy Caligdong and veteran defender Rob Gier remain doubtful for the international friendly against Malaysia on Feb. 26 at the Rizal Memorial Stadium.

Caligdong is still undergoing therapy for his injured knee and could skip the match to focus on his fitness in time for the AFC Challenge Cup in Kathmandu, Nepal, starting March 9.

"I think I'm making progress because I can do sprints now, but I still can't put a lot of power on my kicks," said Caligdong, the recipient of the Philippine Sportswriters' Association's Mr. Football Award sit-up with Azkals executive Phil Younghusband.

Gier is nursing a calf problem, but the Filipino-British defender said he would have come on as a substitute against Australia's Olympic Team in the last match of the Azkals' training camp in Bobbi Thursday night.

The feeling hurts, but it's also ahhh, still to take the risk [of aggravating the injury]," said Gier. "It's better to be injured now than in the Challenge Cup."

With Gier unlikely to play, the Azkals will parade the same backline in the last two matches of their camp in the in front Amos Jorfaz, Jason Gutierrez, Ray-Ayan Supsup and Jovin Bedic.

Reb-Boloc goalkeeper Neil Etheridge has already confirmed his participation in the friendly against the reigning Suzuki Cup champs, which will mark the final game before the Azkals plunge into action in the Challenge Cup.

Local 'Cricket' steals Baguio bout spotlight

LABUTBO local lad Christian "Cricket" Gamora stole the spotlight in the recent BMCC Baguio Bantag-round IV held at the Baguio Convention Center—even if he lost the bout.

The stunned He gamely took on an opponent way bigger than him.

Fighting out of Tuba, Benguet, Gamora lasted the distance with the bigger and stronger Jomard Jacob A., forcing heavily took on Dickerson Verbalino, a respected fighter in the coastal town of Bolinao.

GAZMIN

Gamora fought Verbalino in a specially arranged match despite his opponent being 27 lbs over the weight limit. Verbalino will be charged P1,000 for every pound in excess but the fight failed to push through.

A stunned Verbalino and Gamora put on a show behind a lengthy exchange of punches and couple of body shots.

It was near at the 37:44 mark with Verbalino the expected winner via a referee-stopped contest.

Cricket, however, drew the admiration of the big crowd at the end of the bout.

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Don't wait for P-Noy to save boxing

BARE EYE

Mecah Trinidad

THE PROBLEM—denied here in the business—we regularly hesitate to be totally equipped with proper defense for fear of further injury, avoid take out a professional license has gained wholehearted support from various sectors.

It's long overdue, various international matchmakers have turned to whom legendary fighter managed the career of the great Flash Elorde.

"I love Pemalora Aquino, based on your recommendations, would mostly win in the undefeated of proper strong contest through the Games and Amusements Board," says visiting great ideas seem to be a new champion of the inside-ropped national cycling association, prayerfully known as the Tour of Luzon.

Of course, Salonga is puzzled these has been no empirical substantial data. Hindi-cutting regarding the controversial solution.

After what had happened to Justo Manjarres, who lapsed into coma and died following a savage bout in Coliseum City on Jan. 28, Salonga what authorities should take necessary measures.

Why?

"Because the lives of countless boxers all over the country are in constant danger, based on what had happened to Manjarres," Salonga explains.

Hindi Obama, respected civic leader Erin Mendiburgo, and there's super need for action.

Before, GAB no longer has to wait for an order from Malacañang, says the sought-after proper ten pioneers and competent doctor-to-be.

Chavez says it's the same thing to do, so the GAB should not just watch from the sidelines and do not stop death.

Based on its review, the GAB under the office of the President, should now study, test and look the other way.

The government agency, which supervises philanthropy in the country, could then claim it doesn't have the budget and personnel to form a full-proof testing body.

Tsk, says Gen Bernal, would be the height of irresponsibility.

"He should see to a problem because there are several experts waiting to be tapped, there are who really facilities like the ones in the Philippine General Hospital," he explains.

Bernal was by speaks in behalf of his constituent doctor, Linda Rhoda, her daughter-to-be Lita, and the Rhoda brothers Edna, Jessie, and Marita.

Needless to say, other committed boxing people like Rey Obligacion-to-Cebu, and Filipino too pleaded help.

Newspaperman Manny Pilot, former governor of North Cotabato, but added up to pledge support.

And just as we normally before people.

Jun Jacinto has heard there suddenly are some shaving problems.

"I suspect his teammate pushed Nonito's, I felt some improvement, to get on fighting different weight class," because they wanted to prove to be amazing stock," he told Jones.

Bernal says he likewise learned that the deal is from you already Magsaysay's third fight in a span of only three months.

Now, there will be coming from there (Lord), blood money messages?

The head of the GAB boxing division, didn't himself a doctor?

To clear, the biggest question, based on recent developments, should be: Who will step out into the ring?

NCR dominates Scuaa

ROXAS CITY—National Capital Region made its presence felt in swimming, even in Region 6 (Southern Tagalog) and Region 6 (Western Visayas) shared the limelight in athletics in the 2012 National Team (State Colleges and Universities Athletic Association) Olympics at the Dinagyang Sports Complex.

Hazel Echico completed a double-double when the NCR rahes she clocked two minutes and 15.09 seconds in winning the women's 200m freestyle and timed 29.12 seconds in tolling the women's 50m freestyle.

Completing the big day for NCR in the pool were student Diana Grace Cabellos, who bagged the gold medal in the women's 400m individual medley with a time of six minutes and 40.83 seconds; Arlyn Hamaria, who topped the women's 100m breaststroke with a time of one minute and 32.72 seconds; Jessica Rivera, who dominated the men's individual medley with a time of five minutes and 52.21 seconds; and the men's and women's 200m medley relay teams.

CARAGA presented an all-NCR show in the pools when Ellie Garcia snatched the gold medal in the women's 200M butterfly and 100M backstroke.

In athletics, Khay Jane Guevara of Region 4 captured the gold medal in the 1,500-m women with a time of 12.51, edging out Elena Nicole Ishida of Region 6 (12.59).

Neray Garcia of Region 6 topped the 100-m men with a time of 10.76 against Anthony Colcomidon of Region 4 (11.00) and Kelvin Ellaza of Region 3 (10.97).

KINGS OF THE COURT Chiang Kai-Shek College players and coaching staff celebrate a win as head office Int. shooters and representatives of Tayuu Quezon Avenue after winning the Aspirants Division in the recent 42nd Metro Manila Young Lion Basketball Association. Chiang Kai Shek College will hold a victory party and basilica on Monday at the CKSC grounds starting from 4 p.m. All CKSC alumni are invited to join the celebration.

Hope foils NU, reaches Shakey's volley semis

HIGHLY Sports-Hope Christian School hosted on Dominic Chiong and Max Barente at 6 supplied National U, 25-19, 25-18, to clinch the first semifinal berth in the division's Girls' Volley League-NCR leg of the Rally's Sports Incorporated City last weekend.

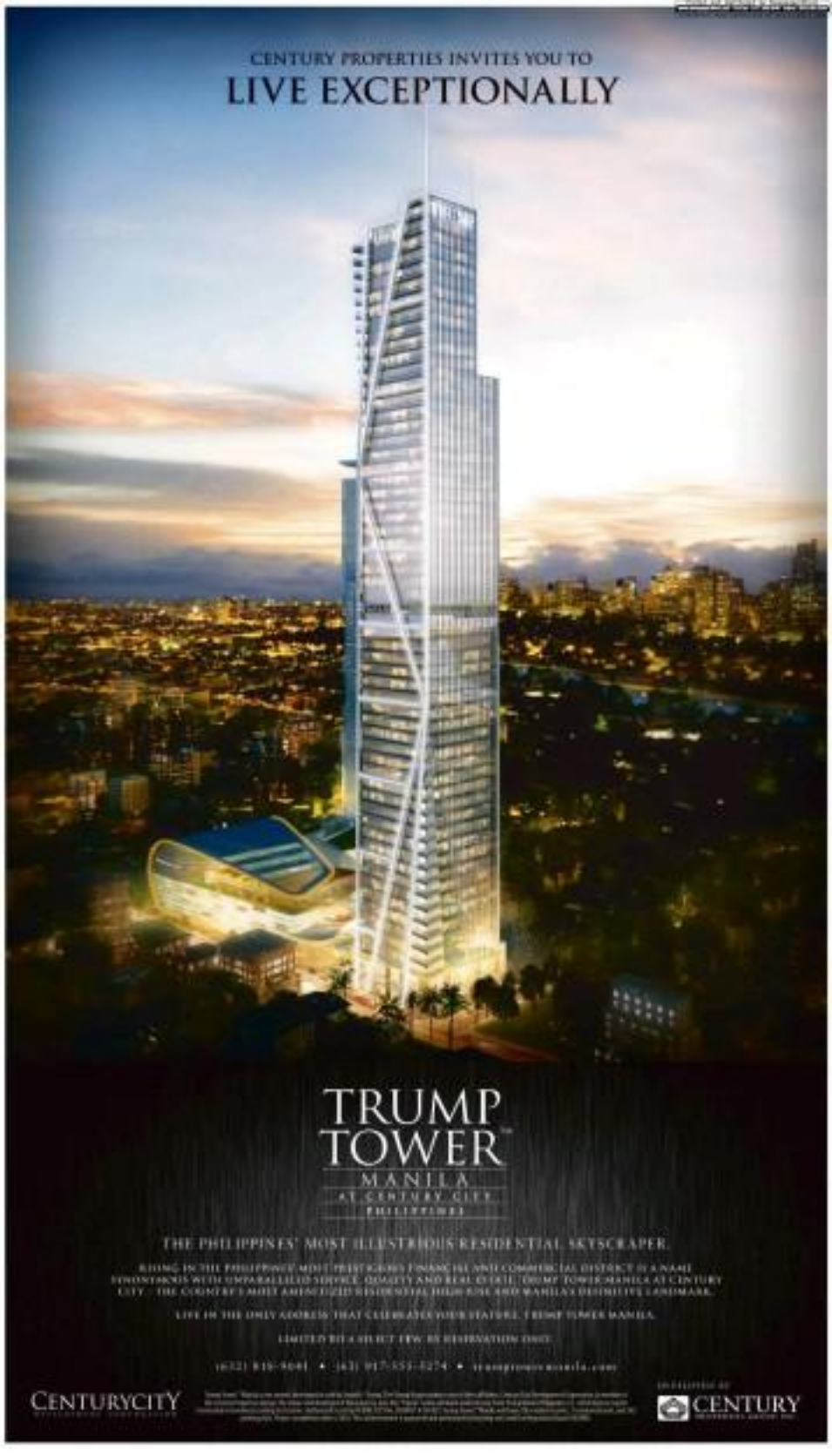
Chiong and Barente helped Hope roll into the Final Four with a 3-0 mark in the event sponsored by Shakey's Pizza.

NU dropped to 4-1, enabling De La Salle-Zobel to take to the semifinal spot to Feel a 4-1 win over Chiang Kai Shek, 25-20, 25-20, 25-11 victory over St. James College Foundation.

ARCG goes eco-friendly with TAT Filipinas

A ROUND of Golf features the all-natural and eco-friendly TAT Filipinas Golf Clinic in San Pedro, Laguna, is tonight's final episode of local TV's only golf and lifestyle show's season 11 on Solar Sports at 10:00pm Philippine Standard Time. The Golf Clinic is the golf instruction segment of the show.

Filipino's amateur APT and APD teams will also be featured on the Golf Clinic segment of the show. Jun Dolor, seasoned golf educator, host Johnny Jones, left, and golf host Arthur Arguelles.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Editor Joseph Voltaire L. Contreras

DID YOU KNOW

OUT of a total crime volume of 48,316 in the National Capital Region in 2011, arrested 63 percent or 30,616 crimes were considered "cleared" or solved, according to the Philippine National Police.
Edralin Bitonio, Inquirer Research

bagong kotse? simple lang.

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Eyes on Gatdula after failed ambush

It looks 'staged,' says lawyer

By Jaymee T. Gamil and Nancy C. Carvajal

FOR NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation (NBI) Deputy Director Reynaldo Esmeralda, only one case came to mind when asked what could be the most likely motive behind the attempt on his life Tuesday night.

The ambush survivor said the attacker—which left him, his brother Wilo, and their driver injured in their vehicle—may be linked to the Restituto Dilano kidnapping case which recently led to the dismissal of former NBI Director Magtanggol Gatdula.

Esmeralda's suspicion was echoed by Justice Secretary Leila de Lima, and drew strong condemnation from Gatdula's camp. A lawyer for the ex-NBI chief demanded an apology from De Lima and noted that the ambush appeared to be "staged."

Esmeralda was one of the NBI resource persons interviewed by a justice department fact-finding panel regarding the Dilano case in December 2011. He testified on how he first learned about the Japanese national's case from Japanese Motor corporation Aimo Tolibi and then he made arrangements to fund-raise to look into the matter.

In media interviews yesterday morning, Esmeralda said he started receiving death threats from unknown persons days ago and that an NBI special investigator had also warned him that a group "related to the Dilano case [has] outside the NBI" was after him.

Over Radyo Inquirer, Esmeralda said he immediately called De Lima from the hospital after the ambush. "I told her to beef up her security because she's part of the equation of those death threats."

An Agence France-Presse report quoted De Lima as saying that the incident might be related to the ranking of Gatdula and 10 of his agents last month after an investigation linked them to Ohara kidnap for ransom case.

She said justice department officials who investigated Gatdula's case had also received death threats recently. "I'm not saying clear this to the persons [for the attack]. I am just warning that there is already a security threat," she said.

In a press conference in Quezon City, Gatdula's lawyer, Abraham Espejo, lashed at De Lima for linking his client to the ambush.

"The secretary should apologize to us for quickly linking my client to the ambush of Esmeralda, which are think was staged," Espejo said. "It was an 'ambush-ose' [advance]."

The lawyer pointed out "inconsistencies" in the initial police reports concerning the ambush. "They had a runway of [security] vehicles, and no one from (Esmeralda's) team fired at the supposed gunmen in reaction to the attack," he said.

"The suspects arrived with long firearms, M-16s, supposedly unaided. Esmeralda's vehicle, but he was covered and sustained only cuts and bruises," Espejo noted.

Espejo maintained that Gatdula alone did not have the capability and resources to carry out the ambush.

"He is not in power, unlike former Secretary Leila de Lima and Esmeralda," he said of his client.

Espejo said he found it unusual that "Esmeralda called De Lima even before he called his wife to say he was all right."

In a statement read by his spokesperson Dorie Flora Manasanera, Gatdula said, "I am deeply saddened by what happened to NBI Deputy Director Esmeralda. But moments, I am greatly distressed over apparent attempts to link me to the ambush."

"I deny any involvement in the said crime. And I condemn insinuations that I have a hand in it," he added.

"Even when my honor was tainted and my innocence prejudged by unfair accusations, I stepped down quietly, and submitted to the ordinary process of the court to clear my name. But this is too much," he said.

At around 7:15 p.m. Tuesday motorcycle-riding gunmen fired at the vehicle carrying Esmeralda, his brother Wilo, their driver Emelio Ortiz and two more police escorts on Gen Gregorio Aleres (san Agustin, as earlier reported) in Paco, Manila, shortly after the vehicle left the NBI headquarters on Taft Avenue.

Esmeralda and Ortiz suffered superficial cuts from glass fragments, but Wilo sustained a gunshot wound on his right shoulder and a splinter to the eye. The three were declared out of danger later that night but remained confined yesterday at Manila Doctors Hospital.

THE AMBUSHED vehicle of NBI Deputy Director Reynaldo Esmeralda was peppered with 11 bullets, all missing their VIP target.

Resort logbook provides lead in hunt for fratmen

By Nita Calleja

A SUMMIT logbook at an Antipolo City resort may be a key in tracking down fraternity leaders allegedly responsible for the death of San Beda College law student Marvin Reglos.

The logbook remains the prime mystery of the vehicles that went inside the resort when it was rented over the weekend for the initiation rites of Lambda Phi Beta fraternity, a group composed mostly of lawyers and law students.

"We are now tracking down the owners of the vehicles. There are at least six in the logbook," Chief Insp. Jaldo Aquino, deputy head of the Antipolo police, told the Inquirer on Wednesday.

An economics graduate at the University of Santo Tomas and a freshman law student at San Beda College, Reglos, 25, succumbed to injuries and was declared dead on arrival at Ospizio Medical Center, where he was brought by a group of men in a red Honda City (WHH-534) on Sunday.

Two law students from San Sebastian College—Eric Castillo, 28, and Rodjie Yap, 24—were later arrested at the hospital. They aroused suspicions when they inquired hastily about Reglos's condition.

Police said they are tracking down at least 17 more men believed to be involved in the hazing.

Recovered from Castillo and Yap were mobile phones and identification cards showing their membership in Lambda Phi Beta.

"Who are the others? We still have to check if the organization is registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission," Aquino said.

Two other suspects, Arjay Oreperia and Jerish Abdula, were identified through the case managers sent to Castillo and Yap's phones, which ordered them to remain right-lipped case the "initiation" rites.

To his fiancée, Castillo said, "Rodjie has told us that he was a housemate of the victim in a boarding house in Manila."

"Please respect our rights," Castillo said when the inquirer tried to get an interview.

Reglos' remains will be brought to his hometown in Burgos, Isabela, after a Mass at San Beda College and a cremation at the Memorial Homes of Investigation headquarters, according to the victim's cousin, Abdulcahr Asuncion.

Reglos worked as an instructor at the University of La Salette in Isabela for a year before entering his law studies in San Beda, the inquirer learned.

Who will protect us from bad elements?

ON TARGET
Ramon Tulfo

FOUR days before he was ambushed, Deputy Director Roy Ernedelin of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) told me that he increased the number of his bodyguards because he had received threats.

He told me that the threats were in connection with the recent scandal at the NBI that revealed in the dismissal of Director Magnaguad Gandela.

The people who were implicated in the scandal suspected him of being the source in my exposé of the kidnapping of Sorina Obara, a Japanese national, by some NBI agents.

"You should also be careful, Man. In fact, you should take more precautions than I do," said Ernedelin.

On Tuesday night, Ernedelin and his bodyguards were travelling on a road in Pasig. Two motorcycle-riding gunmen blocked their car with an M-16 rifle, killing him and his brother, a Manila policeman assigned to him for his safety.

When I spoke to him hours after the ambush, Ernedelin told he was able to duck at the first volley of gunfire.

He instinctively crouched in the back seat and reached for his submachine gun beside him, but things happened too fast.

His brother, who was in the passenger front seat, was also late in reacting.

The bodyguards in the back-up car didn't fire at the motorcycle riders for fear of hitting Ernedelin.

As suddenly as the motorcycles materialized, it disappeared into the rush-hour traffic.

* * *

If a high official of the country's premier law enforcement agency could be ambushed with impunity, who is safe from bad elements?

If our protectors cannot protect themselves, who will protect ordinary, law-abiding citizens?

* * *

The Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) has charged five prominent, law-abiding citizens with "knowingly tolerating the commission of illegal activities" in connection with the raid on a house in Ayala Alabang that yielded millions of pesos in illegal drugs.

Aurelio R. Montinola, Bank of the Philippine Islands president, and lawyer Perry L. Pe, businessman Leonard Gerochi in Denmark, were charged along with the suspected Chinese drug traffickers who leased the house inside the exclusive village.

The PDEA says Montinola and Pe are administrators of the Leonardo E Madrigal estate which, the agency claims, includes the house.

But the house is no longer part of the Madrigal estate, as Jean could Montinola and Pe have known the property which is not underwhich care?

No wonder PDEA boss big drug cases. It's ourselves in filing cases.

Road safety forum: Can we trust our city streets again?

By DJ Yap

FOUR MAY months after the road accident in February 2009 that killed Ateneo Grade School (AGS) student Julian Carlo Miguel "Miggi" Alcantara, his siblings "would rather march in the open sea than walk in the city streets," according to their father.

"They were so scared to walk on the streets. It still hurts. It took us two to three years [to recover]," Jose Fernando Alcantara said in a road safety forum held at Camp Lapu-Lapu yesterday.

In what the newspaper chairman told Ateneo late Chairman she wanted to ride a bicycle, he and his wife immediately bought one "without a second thought."

"[We felt a way] part of the healing process. She was incentivizing to ride the streets again," Alcantara said.

Two year old Amiel was killed when the driver of a van, Ma. Theresa Torres, ran over the boy at the parking lot on the school grounds in Quezon City.

Speaking at the forum at the University of the Philippines (UP) professor Roland Simbulan, widower of another road crash victim, veteran journalist Lourdes "Chit" Ecarlis Simbulan, said road safety awareness should be part of the Filipino culture.

'Personal issue'

"It must be instilled in the basic schools, parishes [and] communities. Yet, accidents are seen as a personal issue rather than a public issue," he said.

Simbulan's wife, who died tragically at UP died on May 13 last year after the cab she was riding in was sideswiped by a bus and then rammed by a second bus on Commonwealth Avenue in Quezon City.

"This issue about road safety is not [a] very personal to me and it should be very personal to all of us," Simbulan said.

For Alcantara, his family's expedition was fraught with lessons about the importance of road safety in everyone's life.

"I am not an economist, and I can say we can measure in every way of the kind of streets it has," he said.

"Whatever happens in our streets we can use. That's our society! Are you happy on the road? Are you safe on the road?" From the economy in the perspective, our lives revolve around the kind of roads we take every day," Alcantara added.

The forum was organized by the Department of Transportation and Communications as part of its "I Swear" campaign under the decade-long Philippine Road Safety Action Plan that started in 2011.

It was also aimed at bridging partnerships between the government and private sector in reducing accident-related deaths and ushering roads safety Transportation Undersecretary Jose Mendoza said.

In his message, Philippine National Police (PNP) Director General Nicanor A. Bartolome assured those in his childhood, "we [the] would just learn to stay on the left side of the street to be safe."

Blind spots

"Now there are blind spots when people just cross the streets. Drivers do not see the children crossing," he said.

Bartolome also reminded motorists and pedestrians to be always careful and observe traffic rules.

Data from the PNP Highway Patrol Group, Department of Public Works and Highways and Metropolitan Manila Development Authority showed that the number of people killed in road accidents rose slightly from 1,782 in 2010 to 1,832 last year.

The number of injured also went up from 28,687 in 2010 to 28,930 in 2011.

But on the vehicle, there was a 3.6% percent drop in the number of road crashes with 83,820 recorded in 2011 from 86,900 the year before. More than 90 percent of the total road crashes occurred in Metro Manila, the study showed.

Reckless imprudence resulting in homicide rises involving the drivers in Aiseh's and Chit's deaths are both still pending in court.

Lim fires police official over kidnap-extortion case

By Jaymee T. Gamil

MANILA Mayor Alfredo Lim yesterday ordered the relief of the Manila Police District (MPD) Station 5 commander after some of his men allegedly kidnapped and removed money from four Bangladeshi nationals in Feb. 14.

In a morning with city police officials, Lim urged them to take "drastic action" against scalawags among their ranks as he announced that Supt. James Abella would be reassigned to the MPD headquarters.

"You are the backbone! That commander need to be careful of those members. Monitor closely the activities of your people. What happened here was insane, they even made the transaction at the [police] station," the mayor said.

At least four members of the MPD Station 5's anti-drugs unit were identified by the four Bangladeshis as among the policemen who arrested them on trumped-up drug charges on Feb. 14.

The victims were released only after they gave more than P1 million to the captors.

Lim ordered a heist for the policemen involved in the kidnap-extortion case—even as he announced the dissolution of all station-level anti-drug units.

From now on, the mayor said, all anti-drug operations would be handled by a central unit now at MPD headquarters.

Following Abella's relief as commander of the MPD Station 5 is Sr. Insp. Rommel Anthony Cruz, a senior inspector of city police who held similar positions in Supt. Ricardo Layug was assigned to head the MPD Station 1 while Supt. Jomar Modequillo replaced Layug as head of Station 5 in Ermita.

Supt. Dionisio V. Trestiza Jr. took over Station 2 in Binondoc, Tondo, as Supt. Aberson Myron Marcos assumed the post of Station 9 commander in Malate.

On the other hand, Supt. Leo Francisco, formerly assigned at the logistics division, took over Ermita's post as Station 10 chief in San Andres Bukid.

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
[illegible] Building, 007 Intramuros St., Manila, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following company/employers have filed with this Regional Office applications for Alien Employment Permits:

Name and Address of Company/ Employer	Name of Foreign National/ Intending	Position
JAPS, BOSS-CULTURE LANGUAGE INSTITUTE INC. #Mindanao Bldg., Quezon cor. 3rd Ave., Manila, Manila	Morikado Aoki Japanese	Japanese Language Teacher
JAPS, BOSS-CULTURE LANGUAGE INSTITUTE INC. #Mindanao Bldg., Quezon cor. 3rd Ave., Manila, Manila	Hiroyuki Furuhashi Japanese	Japanese Language Teacher
CONTINENT CONSULTANTS INC. #6061 Gilbert Rising Tower, Tower I, 2251 Pasay Rotonda, Makati City	Subhash Halder writer	System Consultant
MC GRUOT ENGINEERING (CLARK) LIMITED Penthouse Jose Center Bldg., Corinthian Hills, Ayala Business Park, Ayala Alabang, Muntinlupa City	Simon Peter Ian Mann American	Maintenance Manager
HORSE IN SENSATIONAL ENTERTAINMENT #22 Kalayaan cor. Malingap, Quezon City	Noorbhai Ahemba Khaps Dutch	Managing Director
PHARMEX, INC. G/F Holiday Hi-Tec Advertising Bldg., Makati Ayala Ave., Pasay City	Ahmed Bal Jaiswal Pharmacist	Consultant
SYNEX-LINK, INC. 2807 Robinsons Summit Center, 6783 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Wangpoo Supanyen Thai	Prod - Customer Service Representative
HD GLOBAL GROUP INC. 1801 Block 2000 Bldg., F. Ortigas Jr. Road, Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Stephen Lee Rogers Washington	Senior Project Manager
INFOTECH CORPORATION 2807 BOSS Plaza, Sumulong Street, 6783 Ayala Ave., Makati City	George Melton Wall Tennessee	Software Development and
GLOBAL TURBINE SERVICES, INC. - BRANCH OFFICE UPRC 10, 2299 Don Chino Roces Ave. Ext., Makati City	Salvador M Gomez American	Processing Center Manager - Manila
LOGICA PHILIPPINES INC. 29 Emerald Square, Emerald Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Jane Ann Julian Jillane Van Clemens British	Management Trainee
GENERAL MARIA JOSE INC. #6111 Sampaguita Civic Subdivision, Pasig Subdivision, Brgy. 177, Pasay City, Caloocan City	Jihoon Choi Korean	Teacher
PHILIPPINE NATIONAL BANK 6F PNB Financial Park Center, Pres. Diosdado Macapagal Blvd., Pasay City	Subhash Bayanbaj Bangalore Indian	Senior Technical Analyst
SRI BUSINESS SERVICES INC. 6F 1800 Eastwood Ave. Bldg., 1450 General Kto Cubangbang, Bagumbayan, Quezon City	Bhandari Khan Mohammad Indian	Process Head Process Lead Analyst
IBM GLOBAL SERVICES CORPORATION 18F IBM Tower, 6750 Ayala Ave. cor. V.A. Rufino St., Makati City	Ning Wang Chinese	Customer Service Officer
IBM GLOBAL SERVICES CORPORATION 18F IBM Tower, 6750 Ayala Ave. cor. V.A. Rufino St., Makati City	Yan Huang Chinese	Customer Service Officer
IBM GLOBAL SERVICES CORPORATION 18F IBM Tower, 6750 Ayala Ave. cor. V.A. Rufino St., Makati City	Tai Tai Cam Ngoc Vietnamese	Customer Service Officer
QUEST EXPLORATION DRILLING (PHILIPPINES), INC. Unit 1707 Robinsons-Equitable Bank Tower, 8751 Ayala Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Jeff Charles Catherman American	Mechanical Supervisor
QUEST EXPLORATION DRILLING (PHILIPPINES), INC. Unit 1707 Robinsons-Equitable Bank Tower, 8751 Ayala Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City	Sanmohamed Mukhtarbhai Bangalore	Contract Manager
FACTSET PHILIPPINES, INC. 6F Corporate Center Industry Plaza Campus Ave. McKinley Hill, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City	Bhuwan Bora Lebanese	Financial Analyst Analyst
FACTSET PHILIPPINES, INC. 6F Corporate Center Industry Plaza Campus Ave. McKinley Hill, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City	Marianne Anderson Danish	Financial Analyst Analyst
ADITYA BIRLA MINACS PHILIPPINES INC. 18F IBM Eastwood Ave. Bldg., Eastwood City Cyberpark, 188 E. Rodriguez Jr. Avenue, Quezon City	Shah Faiz Bhushan French	Customer Relationship Officer - French Banking
ADITYA BIRLA MINACS PHILIPPINES INC. 18F IBM Eastwood Ave. Bldg., Eastwood City Cyberpark, 188 E. Rodriguez Jr. Avenue, Quezon City	Shringa Arvid Tilo, of Liaison	Customer Relationship Officer - French Banking
ADITYA BIRLA MINACS PHILIPPINES INC. 18F IBM Eastwood Ave. Bldg., Eastwood City Cyberpark, 188 E. Rodriguez Jr. Avenue, Quezon City	Antonio Ignacio Fabosa Commercial	Customer Relationship Officer - French Banking
ADITYA BIRLA MINACS PHILIPPINES INC. 18F IBM Eastwood Ave. Bldg., Eastwood City Cyberpark, 188 E. Rodriguez Jr. Avenue, Quezon City	Marlene Rose Rosales Manila	Customer Relationship Officer - French Banking
SMI BUSINESS SOLUTIONS, INC. 19th Northgate Cyber Tower, 9 Mindanao Ave., Bgy. 166 Kalyaan Ave., Makati City	Dhanraj Sita Kalate Philippines	Mortgage Underwriting Data Analyst Officer
SMI BUSINESS SOLUTIONS, INC. 19F Northgate Cyber Tower, 9 Mindanao Ave., Bgy. 166 Kalyaan Ave., Makati City	Tack Ping Lee Malaysian	Mortgage Underwriting Data Analyst Officer
MITSUBA PHILIPPINES TECHNICAL CORPORATION 27 Cecil Hills Drive, Makati City	Yutaka Shimizu Japanese	President
LIAN DALI PHILIPPINES CORPORATION 7/F - Chief Room, Ten Fortune Bldg., cor. Principe St. Brgy. Wack-Wack, Mandaluyong City	Yasuke Tomoaki Japanese	Executive Vice President and General Manager
DERRICK HOLDINGS LIMITED Suite 2507 Manila Trust Bldg., 8 Wall St. cor. Ayala Ave., Salcedo Village, Makati City	Phillip Robert Dalby New Zealand	Consultant
SEGERING CO. LTD. 23 Cecilio Bldg., 85 Arthur Highway, Manila, Metro Manila City	Lina Cheng Cheng Taiwanese	Technical Consultant
CONCHITA BUENO DIMAANO MARKETING 501 L.B. Salvador St., San Antonio, Parañaque City	Wong Kau Ho Kowloon	Marketing Staff
INTERCON BRANDED SOLUTIONS (PHILIPPINES), INC. 6F-6TH Office Tower, Makati Ave., Makati City	Daniel Tsuyoi Richard Mangy British	Director for Research and Analytics
INTERCON BRANDED SOLUTIONS (PHILIPPINES), INC. 6F-6TH Office Tower, Makati Ave., Makati City	Pierre Paul Yves Rossetti Belgian	Financial Analyst
PHILIP PH TRAVEL CORPORATION Room 402 Asiatico Executive Center, 1001 R. Arnaiz cor. R. Salas, Manila	Sanchez Kia Korean	Marketing Manager
PHILIP PH TRAVEL CORPORATION Room 402 Asiatico Executive Center, 1001 R. Arnaiz cor. R. Salas, Manila	Chanagan Sk Korean	General Manager
BOOK STORE ADVERTISING MUSIC PUBLISHING SERVICES Unit 10, 27/F, Square Bldg. Legaspi Ave., cor. Francisco Cruz St., SF Antonio, Muntinlupa City	Sun Ah Choi Korean	Music Tutor

If you have any information/opinion in the above mentioned application/s please communicate with this Regional Division.

ATTY. ALAN S. ARCADIO, CESO III
Regional Director

DOLE-NCR-No. 2012-02

CITY OF LAPU-LAPU

Project Ref. No.: [illegible]
Name of Project: [illegible]
Location of Project: [illegible]

INVITATION TO BID

"The City of Lapu-Lapu and Special Bids and Awards Committee (SBAC), invites prospective manufacturers and suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the [illegible] project.

Name of Contract: [illegible]
Location of Project: [illegible]
Brief Description:
1.) [illegible]
Approved Budget for the Contract: P [illegible]

2.) [illegible]
Approved Budget for the Contract: P [illegible]

Specifications:

Bidding Documents:

Eligibility Requirements:

Bid Security:

Approved Budget for the Contract: P [illegible]
Source of Funds: General Fund
Contract Duration: [illegible]
Delivery Period: [illegible]

Prospective bidders should have completed, within the period specified in the BDS, a contract similar to the Project. The description of an eligible contract is given in the Instructions to Bidders.

The Quezon City Bids and Awards Committee (QCBAC) now invites bids for the above Contract. Prospective bidders should have completed, within the period specified in the BDS, a contract similar to the Project. The description of an eligible contract is given in the Instructions to Bidders.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using a non-discretionary "pass/fail" criterion as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The Schedule of bidding activities is as follows:

	Description	Schedule
1	[illegible]	[illegible]
2	[illegible]	[illegible]
3	[illegible]	[illegible]
4	[illegible]	[illegible]
5	[illegible]	[illegible]
6	[illegible]	[illegible]

Bid Documents will be available only at the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P [illegible] to the Cashier of the City Treasurer's Office, Lapu-Lapu City.

The Lapu-Lapu City BAC reserves the right to reject any or all bids, declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract without incurring any liability, and to waive any defect therein, and to accept the bid most advantageous to the government.

Approved by:

[illegible]
Chairperson

Rare pink diamond found in Australia

SYDNEY—Mining giant Rio Tinto said on Wednesday it has unearthed a "remarkable" 12.76-carat pink diamond in Australia, the largest of the rare and precious stones ever found in the resource-rich nation.

Named the Argyle Pink Jubilee, the huge rough stone was found at Rio's pink diamond-rich enclave in the Kimberley region of Western Australia and would take 10 days to cut and polish, the miner said.

"This rare diamond is generating incredible excitement," said Josephine Johnson from Rio's Argyle Pink Diamonds division.

"A diamond of this caliber is unprecedented—it has taken 26 years of Argyle production to unearth this stone and we may never see one like this again."

The individual who gets to wear this remarkable pink diamond will be incredibly lucky indeed." Though it would not speculate on how much the Jubilee was worth, Rio said ex-

A 12.76-CARAT pink diamond set

remely high-quality pink diamonds could fetch in excess of USD1 million per carat, meaning it is likely to go for at least $10 million.

The light pink Argyle Jubilee is a similar color to the 24-carat Williamson Pink given to Britain's Queen Elizabeth II as a wedding gift which was later set into a Cartier brooch for her coronation.

The Williamson was discovered in Tanzania in 1947 and is named among the Queen's pink diamonds in existence. It is the ninth-largest in the world. AFP

Red Cross calls for ceasefires in Syria; more than 60 killed

BEIRUT/DAMASCUS—Syrian government forces killed more than 60 people on Tuesday in assaults on villages and an artillery barrage in the restive city of Homs, activists said, and the Red Cross called for daily ceasefires to allow in urgently needed aid.

Washington, which is preparing for a "Friends of Syria" meeting of Western and Arab states opposing President Bashar al-Assad, declined to rule out eventually providing arms to rebels seeking to overthrow him.

UN chief Ban Ki-moon said he was searching for a candidate to succeed as humanitarian coordinator for Syria, whose role could evolve into seeking a political solution to the conflict.

Activists said at least 30 people died in the bombardment of the Baba Amro neighborhood of Homs city, and at least 15 were killed when forces trying to crush opposition to Assad stormed villages in northern Idlib province.

In Damascus, security forces opened fire on demonstrators overnight, wounding at least four activists said. Violence in his hit the capital over the past week, underscoring Assad's assertion that the 11-month-old uprising against his rule is limited to the provinces and the work of saboteurs.

Activist accounts of the violence could not be confirmed.

The government has not kept foreign journalists from Syria.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said it had asked authorities and rebels to agree daily ceasefires so life-saving aid can reach civilians in hard-hit areas including Homs.

"It should last at least two hours every day, so that ICRC staff and Syrian Arab Red Crescent volunteers have enough time to deliver aid and everyone the wounded and the sick," ICRC president Jakob Kellenberger said.

Protesters and Arab posters that are openly seeking Assad's downfall are preparing for the inaugural meeting of a "Friends of Syria" contact group in Tunisia on Friday.

Asked about the prospect of arming the rebels, US State Department spokesperson Victoria Nuland said: "We don't believe that it makes sense to contribute now to the further militarization of Syria." But she added: "That said ... if we can't get Assad to yield to the pressure that we are all bringing to bear, we may have to consider additional measures."

Russia and China back Assad's own program for reforms, which includes plans for a referendum on Sunday on a new constitution which would lead to elections in 90 days. Assad says this should satisfy demands for more democracy, his opponents say the proposals are a sham.

Russia said it would not attend the "Friends of Syria" meeting because the Syrian government would not be represented.

Lebanon, which has tried to distance itself from the turmoil across its border, will also stay away from the Tunis meeting.

Tunisia and China have faced Western and Arab criticism for blocking UN actions against Syria. A former Syrian diplomat military coalition who defected to January told Reuters Moscow's arms sales to Damascus—nearly $1 billion last year—had increased sharply since the start of the uprising.

Russia and China have faced Western and Arab criticism for blocking UN actions against Syria. A former Syrian diplomat military coalition who defected to January told Reuters Moscow's arms sales to Damascus—nearly $1 billion last year—had increased sharply since the start of the uprising.

In an interview with Reuters, UN chief Ban said he was vigorously canvassing prospective candidates for the role of UN humanitarian coordinator for Syria. "The UN General Assembly asked me to appoint a humanitarian coordinator for Syria. I am now in search of someone for the job. Russia has said it would support a UN humanitarian envoy. Reuters

Ex-IMF chief Strauss-Kahn held overnight in sex ring probe

LILLE, France—Former IMF chief Dominique Strauss-Kahn was in police custody overnight on "aggravated pimping" allegations that he took part in orgies in Paris and Washington with prostitutes paid for by businessmen.

The 62-year-old former finance minister, who until last year was the frontrunner to replace Nicolas Sarkozy as president of France, had been summoned as a witness, but prosecutors said he was now a suspect.

He turned up voluntarily at a police station in the northern city of Lille and prosecutors said he would be detained on suspicion of "aggravating aggravated pimping by an organized gang" and "misuse of company funds."

A magistrate will decide whether the evidence supports charges on these or other potential offenses. He could be cleared, be charged and released on bail or remanded in custody pending a trial which could take years.

DOMINIQUE Strauss-Kahn ar-

A judge late on Tuesday extended Strauss-Kahn's detention another 24 hours to Thursday morning, an informed source said.

He can be held a maximum of 96 hours without charge but was not expected to stay in custody more than 48 hours.

Under French law, aggravated organized pimping carries a prison term of up to 20 years and profiling from embezzlement five years and a large fine.

Between interrogations, Strauss-Kahn was expected to remain under guard in a hotel in a spartan 7.5-square-meter cell with a simple foam mattress, a sink and a hole-to-the-floor squat toilet.

Investigating magistrates want to know whether he was aware that the masters who entertained him at parties in restaurants, hotels and swingers' clubs in Washington, Paris and several other European capitals were paid prostitutes.

They will also seek to determine whether Strauss-Kahn knew that the escorts were paid with funds fraudulently obtained by his hosts from a French public works company for which one of them worked as a senior executive. AFP

boi BOARD OF INVESTMENTS dti

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that RUBI FEDRE PLASTIC CORP. is applying for registration with the Board of Investments (BOI) as New Export Producer of Plastic Resin with an annual capacity of 21,600,000 pcs. or other finished products and will be located at Purok 3, Lot 875, Brgy. Maybo Sur, Calamba City, Laguna.

Any person with valid objections on the above-mentioned project may file his/her objection in writing, under oath, with the BOI within three (3) days from the date of this publication/posting.

Engr. RUBEN B. CARA
Director
Manufacturing Industries Department

WORLDBRIEFS

Chavez to undergo new surgery

DAMASCUS—Months after declaring himself cancer-free, President Hugo Chavez said on Tuesday he will undergo more surgery in Cuba to remove a cyst, allowing that chances were "high" the lesion was cancerous. The news raised new questions about Chavez's health as the lethal leader, seeking reelection, faces a serious challenge from a unified opposition candidate in an October presidential vote. Chavez, 57, who has been in power since 1999, said the lesion was found during a medical checkup later the weekend in Cuba, where he first underwent cancer surgery on his pelvis area in June. "It is a small lesion of nearly two centimeters in diameter, very clearly visible," Chavez said in state-led TV's television, adding it was "in the same area where a tumor was removed nearly a year ago." "There'll have to be a new operation to extract it to analyze it examined to see if it's malignant or not." AFP

HK leader denies bribery

HONG KONG—Hong Kong leader Donald Tsang on Wednesday denied he had breached bribery laws, after he admitted taking a luxury yacht trip offered by a tycoon during a public row over the granting of lifelong titles, whose ban is due to expire in June. Sacked accusations of bribery and conflict of interest after local media published pictures of him and his wife spending a weekend on the triple-deck luxury boat within a few tycoons last week. Tsang said he was "saddened" by the claims, after confessing that he had accepted the offer but said he had paid for the expenses of getting there at "market price." "I am saddened by the reports which questioned my integrity and suggested there's a collusion between the government and businessmen," Tsang told public broadcaster RTHK. The chief executive—whose wife is from Macau—said he was in the gaming hub, which is about an hour by ferry from Hong Kong, for a private visit including tomb-sweeping and denied there was any luxurious treatment on the yacht. AFP

100 killed in Libya tribal clashes

TRIPOLI—Fierce clashes between two tribes in Libya's remote southeastern desert have killed more than 100 people over the past 10 days, tribal sources said Wednesday. At least 113 people from the Tebbo tribe and another 20 from the Zwai tribe have been killed in the town of Kufra since fighting erupted on February 12, the sources said. "We are under siege since a week. Since the start of the clashes, 113 people (from our side) have been killed, including six children," Tebbo chief Issa Abdelmajid told AFP by satellite phone. He said another 241 members of his tribe have been wounded. Abdelmajid, a former opponent of Moamer Kadhafi who fought the slain dictator's forces to last year's conflict, was previously tasked by the ruling National Transitional Council with monitoring Libya's southeastern border. At least 23 people from the Zwai tribe have also been killed and another 50 wounded in the clashes, said sources from that tribe. AFP

Death sought for Mubarak

CAIRO—The chief prosecutor in the trial of ousted Egyptian leader Hosni Mubarak said on Monday in his closing remarks that the former president should be given the death penalty for the killings of protesters in last year's uprising.

Mustafa Sulaiman said Mubarak, who ruled over the Arab world's most populous country for nearly 30 years, clearly authorized use of live ammunition and a shoot-to-kill policy against peaceful protesters.

According to government estimates, around 850 were killed in the crackdown from Jan. 25 to Feb. 11, 2011.

For this, Sulaiman said, the former president should be judged. Mubarak and five understudies, including his longtime Interior Minister Habib al-Adly and four former top security officers, should receive the maximum sentence.

"This is not a case about the killing of one or ten or 20 civilians, but a case of an entire nation," he said. AP

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education
Region VII
DIVISION OF SAMAR
Catbalogan

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

This Department of Education, Division of Samar (Region VII) through the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) invites all prospective bidders and eligible Contractors to apply for eligibility and to submit bidding scroll for the following contracts:

NAME OF CONTRACT	: Construction of Classrooms in Basey Central Elementary School Basey Classroom Shortage (Phase IV-CY 2012)
CONTRACT* Source	: Lot No. 1 b - Bureau National Schools, Continuing Fund
BRIEF DESCRIPTION	: Lot No. 1 b - Construction of Two (2) Storey, Four (4) Classroom Lot No. 1 b - Construction of Two (2) Storey, Two (2) Classroom
FOR THE CONTRACT(ING)	: Two (2) Calendar Days
CONTRACT DURATION	: 180 Calendar Days

Prospective Bidders should have an experience in similar contract within a period of two (2) years prior to the date of submission and receipt of bids, as mentioned in contract shall be entitled to the preference set forth in Republic Act No. 9184 otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act.

The submission of sales of bidder's duly signed and certified Statement of Contracts to be Bidder, a valid and updated Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) License and Registration for the type of contract and cost of contract being bid, and updated Income and Business Tax Returns per Revenue Regulations No. 3-98, as amended, together with a copy of the latest Financial Statement of the company, as the requirement prior to submission of Bid. (GPPB Resolution). Those PCAB is accepted the prospective bidder should have a Net Financial Contracting Capacity (NFCC) computation which is at least equal to the ABC.

All participants wishing to Eligibility Check, Evaluation and Post Qualification of Bids, Bidding Documents, Plans and Specifications and other documents may purchase the same from the Office of the Division of Samar, Bid and Awards Committee (BAC) Secretariat upon payment of the non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents amounting to Five Thousand Pesos (Php5,000.00) to the BAC Secretariat.

The schedule of activities are as follows:

	ACTIVITIES	SCHEDULE
1.	Advertising / Posting of ITB	February 23, March 01, 2012
2.	Issuance and Availability	February 23, March 01, 2012
3.	Pre-bid Conference	February 23, March 01, 2012
4.	Submission and Opening of Bids	March 12, 2012
5.	Bid Evaluation	March 12-16, 2012
6.	Post Qualification	March 19-20, 2012
7.	Approval of Resolution and Issuance of Notice to Award	March 21 - 23, 2012
8.	Contract Signing and Signing	March 27 - April 27, 2012
9.	Issuance of Notice to Proceed	April 30, 2012

Bid documents will be available for prospective bidders upon payment of non-refundable Php5,000.00 to the BAC Secretariat.

Bids must be duly accompanied by any of the acceptable securities to compensate or indemnify prospective bidders for any component in the preparation of their bids and amounting to five percent (5%) equal any of the bid bond, declared a failure bid and be issued the contract.

ATTY. EMMA G. DEVANTIRA, Ph.D.
Chief, Schools Division Superintendent
BAC Chairman

APPROVED:
Engr. EMELIA C. QUITALIG, Ph.D., CESO V
Schools Division Superintendent
Head of the Procuring Entity

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GREENHILLS

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GREENHILLS

The WORLD

Editor Lorenzo B. Gozo

Protests over Koran burning spread

KABUL—Furious Afghans threw rocks and screamed "death to America" on Wednesday, setting fire to shops and vehicles as grandsons rang out as protests against Korans being burnt at a US-run military base.

At least one person was killed and 21 wounded as protests swept the country, commissioned in the Afghan capital Kabul and the eastern city of Jalalabad, where a group of students set fire to an effigy of US President Barack Obama.

The US embassy in Kabul declared it was on lockdown and Afghan police and forty were dispatching reinforcements to stop no-angry mob, torching cars and smashing shops, from marching into the center of the capital.

Hundreds of people poured onto the Jalalabad road, throwing stones at US military base Camp Phoenix, where troops guarding the base fired into the air and black smoke from burning cars rose, an AFP photographer said.

Afghanistan is a deeply religious country where Afghan anger over Islam have frequently provoked violent protests and Afghans were incensed that any Western troops could be so insensitive, 10 years after the 2001 US-led invasion.

The US commander in Afghanistan, General John Allen, apologized and ordered an investigation into the incident, admitting that religious materials, including Korans "were inadvertently taken to an incinerator facility."

He also ordered that all troops would be trained in the "proper handling of religious materials no later than March 1."

US Defense Secretary Leon Panetta also apologized, saying that he and Allen "disapprove of such conduct to the strongest possible terms" and promising to "take all steps necessary and appropriate so that this never happens again."

The United States leads and dominates the 130,000-strong foreign military fighting a 10-year Taliban insurgency in Afghanistan.

The Kabul demonstrations attracted extreme police, forcing them to retreat and there were fired as the crowd tried to march on the center of the capital, wounding at least 11 people, according to a health ministry official.

"Two of them are in critical condition," the official told AFP on condition of anonymity.

Police spokesperson Ashraf Ramazani denied police opened fire, but said the demonstrators "got violent after they attacked Camp Phoenix" and blocked the key highway that runs towards the Pakistan border.

"They are marching toward Kabul. Police are trying to stop them. We have sent more extra forcements to the area," The US embassy announced on its Twitter feed that it was on lockdown and that all travel was suspended.

"Please, everyone, be safe out there," it added.

A second protest erupted in west Kabul, involving about 200 university students, a police spokesperson said.

In Jalalabad, there were pockets of demonstrations across the eastern city. Gunshots were heard but police did not confirm firing. Crowds drove rocks as cars and they set up fires in the streets, an AFP reporter said.

Dr. Ahmad Ali said one person was killed and 10 others had been admitted to Jalalabad hospital with gunshot wounds.

"I saw the body myself. He is a young man from the protesters," Ali said.

More than 1,000 demonstrators, many of them university students, blocked the highway chanting "Death to Americans, Death to Obama," an AFP reporter said.

Elsewhere in the country, about 800 gathered to disperse center Bamiki Bamak in Logar province, a Radiopeace for Taliban violence south of Kabul, shouting anti-US slogans, said Sayed Habib Agha, the district chief.

Reports that the Koran had been mistreated emerged on Tuesday, but it remained unclear exactly who was responsible.

Two US officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity, told AFP the military removed Korans from the US-run prison at Bagram because inmates were suspected of using the holy book to pass messages to each other. AFP

AFGHANS demonstrators show copies of Koran books allegedly set alight by US soldiers at the Bagram airbase. —

Good Corporate Citizen. United Laboratories, Inc. (Unilab) was once again awarded by the city government of Mandaluyong as one of the Top Ten Taxpayers of the city. For the year 2011, Unilab was hailed as the top non-corporate taxpayer of the "Tiger City of the Country." Photo shows (from l to r) Mandaluyong City Mayor Benhur Abalos presenting the trophy to Romeo R. Rodriguez, Division Vice President for Treasury of Unilab while Gil A. Santos, Senior Vice President and Treasurer of Unilab (center) looks on.

BPI brings Suze Orman to Manila as part of its Financial Wellness Advocacy

True to its advocacy of democratizing access to financial advice and espousing financial wellness, Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI) is proud to bring renowned financial expert Ms. Suze Orman to the Philippines for a series of inspiring talks about personal finance.

BPI and Orman share similar advocacies on financial wellness. Orman, multi-awarded television host, motivational speaker and best-selling author, is also a well-known personal finance advisor. BPI has been a prime mover of financial wellness in the country through its extensive financial literacy and advisory programs for its various customer segments. The bank invites industry expert speakers not only to high network individuals and corporate clients, but also to overseas Filipinos, salaried employees and SMEs, and addresses their financial needs through relevant, easily accessible savings, investment and credit products.

Orman's upcoming talks to BPI audiences, her first-ever appearance in the country, provides a high point in the bank's financial literacy campaign. BPI believes Orman's message will provide important advice to those who want to become more financially well.

Orman will be giving a series of talks to clients and employees of BPI, starting with an exclusive luncheon meeting on February 28 at the NBC Tent. Ms. Orman's wealth of experience in personal finance promises to make the event a first-class source of practical advice for Filipino customers in better managing and growing their money.

SUZE ORMAN

ABOUT SUZE ORMAN

Orman has been called "a force in the world of personal finance" and a "one-woman financial empire" by the USA Today. She is also a two-time Emmy Award-winning television host, New York Times mega-bestselling author, magazine, and online columnist.

Orman is the contributing editor to "O, The Oprah Magazine," the Editor-At-Large of CNBC Magazine, and is the host and presenter of the award-winning Suze Orman Show on CNBC. Not only is she the single most successful fundraiser in the history of Public Television, but she has also appeared on most Oprah Shows than any individual. The Oracle Alan Webb Award is bestowed upon an individual who freely utilizes a key role in laying the foundation for future generations of women in media.

In 2007, Oprah Winfrey named Orman as one of the top ten most influential speakers in the world, and more notably, she was the 1947 journalist that fast Barclay making her 2007's top female motivational speaker in the world.

In addition, Orman says she was the recipient of the National Equality Award from the Human Rights Campaign. In April 2008 Orman was presented with the Anzelle Kelhart Award for her message of financial empowerment for women. Saturday Night Live has parodied Suze on times during 2008-2011.

In October 2006, Orman was the recipient of a Visionary Award from the Council for Economic Education for being a champion of economic empowerment. In July 2008 Forbes named Orman 16th on their list of The Most Influential Women in Media. In May 2008 Orman was presented with an honorary degree Doctor of Humane Letters from the University of Missouri. In May 2008 and May 2009 Time Magazine named Orman as one of the TIME 100, The Most Influential People.

In October 2010 Forbes named Orman as one of "The World's 100 Most Powerful Women." In May 2010 Orman received an honorary Doctor of Commercial Science degree from Bentley University.

In 2011, America's most accessible financial advisor was featured in the Oprah's Master Class alongside Dr. Phil and Dr. Oz on Oprah's Friends Network. Orman recently launched a new Lifetime series "America's Money Class with Suze Orman" on Oxygen, providing single advice and offering viewers a chance to win up to $50,000.

Orman grew up on the South Side of Chicago and she earned her B.S. in social work from the University of Illinois.

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Editor Raul G. Marcelo ● Assistant Editor Corrie S. Mariano

BUSINESS

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■ PH international air travel sector grew in '11 /B6

PPP schools project attracts 15 firms

First phase to see construction of 9,332 classrooms

By Nico T. Dichoso Jr.

THE GOVERNMENT'S Public-Private Partnership (PPP) for School Infrastructure Project has attracted an initial pool of 15 companies, according to an official of the Department of Education. The three-phase project is estimated to cost P10.5 billion initially and the government intends to pay for the infrastructure construction over 10 years using staggered appropriations from the national government.

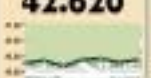
Education Undersecretary Francisco M. Varela said at a conference in Makati City yesterday that as of this week, 15 companies have purchased bid documents for the PPP project. The 15 are apparently a mix of local and foreign companies, some of them found or affiliated with listed companies. It remains to be seen whether they would partner with other companies later on, said Varela, who declined to disclose other details this early in the process.

The first phase of the PPP for School Infrastructure project has three packages: Northern Luzon (360 schools, 2,030 classrooms), Central Luzon (745 schools, 2,999 classrooms), and Calabarzon (1,497 schools, 4,203 classrooms). The DepEd will accept bids for each package, which means there

SEE B2

INDICATORS

PESO-DOLLAR RATE
Feb. 22, 2012
42.620



STOCK MARKET
Feb. 22, 2012
33.35

Local stocks resume climb

THE LOCAL stock index resumed its upswing yesterday to nearing record recoveries, as investors were emboldened by a recently concluded second bailout package for Greece.

The main share Philippine Stock Exchange index recovered 20.26 points or 0.66 percent to finish at 4,934.29. It hit an intra-day peak of 4,950.53, breaching the all-time high closing level of 4,943.94 but without topping the record-close day high of 4,960.04 seen last Monday.

"I think it's more on the Greek bailout," said Jose Abel Lazaro, head of research at Campos

Lazaro & Co. "Investors continue to be bullish and are ignoring rising valuations."

"Market sentiments are bullish. There are lots of money looking for better albeit risky returns," said Manny Lazaro, deputy chief of PNB Securities.

All counters rebounded from the previous day's profit-taking but the trading firm sub-index gained the most with its 1.3-percent rise.

Value turnover amounted to P8.11 billion. Thirty-seven (37) advancers that overwhelmed ten (10) decliners while 57 stocks were unchanged.

LOCAL B3

OFW remittances seen to grow 6% this year

By Michelle V. Ramos

METROBANK expects remittances to the Philippines to grow by 6 percent this year despite the prolonged crisis in the eurozone, saying sustained demand for Filipino workers in other labor markets will boost the amount of money they send home.

In its latest paper examining its assumptions, Metrobank said the money sent by overseas Filipino workers to the Middle East and Asia was seen to lead the growth in overall remittances as the expanding economies in those regions required more workforce.

Metrobank also said that OFWs in the United States, which remains fragile despite recovering from a recession since 2009, seem to resume good industries led by healthcare and education and were thus seen to continue consuming goods in remittances to the Philippines.

"The likely decline in remittances growth due to the blast zone could in turn to be offset by the expected growth in remittances especially coming from the Middle East and Asian countries," Metrobank said in the paper written by research analyst Pauline Sevilla.

Metrobank said remittances, given its ability to fuel household consumption, were likely to support faster economic growth for this year compared with 2011.

It said the Philippine economy would likely grow 6.6 percent this year following its 3.7-percent expansion last year.

"The outlook for remittances[ ] supports our view that GDP growth will be higher at 4.6 percent this year, underpinned by still robust consumption spending and a vibrant services sector," Metrobank said.

Last year, remittances to the Philippines amounted to $20.1 billion, rising 7.2 percent from the previous year's $18.5 billion.

The Philippines is the fourth-biggest recipient of remittances after China, India and Mexico. Of the estimated 9% million Filipinos, about 10 percent are believed to be working offshore.

Surging crude oil prices worry BSP

THE LATEST spike in oil price resulting from the standoff between Europe and oil-producer Iran has caught the attention of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, which acknowledged that the Dubai crude price has breached its assumption for the year.

BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo said that when the central bank set its inflation target of 3 to 5 percent for this year and next, it assumed that Dubai crude would average between $90 and $110 a barrel.

Dubai crude, however, has been hovering close to $120 a barrel over the last few days and hit $131 yesterday at the dispute between Europe and Iran over the latter's alleged nuclear program caused market players to be concerned over potential disruptions to oil supply in the months ahead.

European Union officials have imposed a ban on oil imports from Iran starting July as a means to pressure the Middle Eastern country to stop its alleged nuclear program. Iran, estimated to account for about 4 percent of global oil supply has denied making any nuclear program.

The Philippines is an oil import-dependent country, buying about 90 percent of its requirements from abroad. Accession to Dubai crude price pushes local pump prices and the cost of other basic commodities.

"Recent developments have seen oil prices

SUNDAY B2

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SMDC profit jumps by 38%

Firm corners biggest share of Metro Mla market

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE SY FAMILY-led SM Development Corp. grew its net profit last year by 38 percent to P4.14 billion on a double-digit increase in earnings from residential development projects.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange on Wednesday, SMDC and consolidated revenue reached P14.89 billion, up by 70 percent seen in 2011.

Cash flow based on earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization (Ebitda) hit P4.95 billion, for an Ebitda margin of 33 percent.

Revenue from real estate operations during the year soared by 79 percent to P10.38 billion from a year ago, resulting in a net profit contribution of P4.04 billion, up 56 percent from a year ago.

"SMDC's strong performance last year confirms the sustainability of its past successes. The company has already become one of the preferred brands in condominium living, thus ensuring the necessary momentum to continue delivering positive results," said SMDC vice chair and chief executive officer Henry Sy, Jr.

Sy said SMDC was committed to responsible governance, sound financial management and continued innovation to ensure the long-term sustainability.

SMDC reported a strong market acceptance of SM Residences and M Place products. This was attributed to deeper confidence in the company's ability to complete its projects.

SMDC said its "consistent offerings of high-quality and well-designed residential units built by an experienced team composed of the country's top contractors, engineers, architects, and interior designers also allowed it to gain further traction and brand recognition."

The company's net earnings over the past five years have grown by an average of 44.6 percent.

For the whole of 2013, SMDC presold 11,726 residential condominium units worth about P26.17 billion. The level was 14 percent higher than the amount of units pre-sold in the previous year. It likewise exceeded SMDC's target for the year by 11 percent.

Total assets for the period reached P54.77 billion, 25 percent higher than year-ago level.

In a recent study done by the Advisory and Research Services of Colliers International Philippines, SMDC registered the largest market share of 29 percent in Metro Manila. SMDC has consistently been number one in Colliers' property surveys since July 2009.

It currently has 13 residential projects under its SM Residences brand and two projects under the M Place brand. For 2013, five more residential condominium projects will be launched.

Alaska's Q4 income up 7%

ALASKA Milk Corp. reported a 7 percent year-on-year (yoy) growth in the fourth quarter of 2012 to P432 million, as higher volume during that seasonally strong season offset higher margins.

For the full year 2012, however, net profit dropped by 29 percent to P1.3 billion due to higher cost of inputs and slightly slower sales compared to 2011.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange on Wednesday, ANC raised that operating income for the full year dropped 6.6 percent to P1.29 billion. Cost of sales grew by 12 percent to P6.67 billion while operating margin for the year narrowed to 9.66 percent from 10.1 percent seen ago.

Sales volume across the company's line of milk products stayed a strong runaway in the fourth quarter, which ANC attributed to various consumer and trade initiatives that were carried out to drive consumption during a seasonally strong fourth quarter.

Revenue for the fourth quarter grew by 12 percent to P4.65 billion from a year ago, likewise picking up from the 2 percent year-on-year revenue growth in the third quarter. Doris C. Dumlao

PSBank posts record bottom line

PHILIPPINE Savings Bank, the thrift banking arm of the Metrobank group, grew its net profit by last year by 12 percent to a record high of P2.2 billion on higher lending and investment volumes, as well as improved loan margin.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, PSBank said last year's profit growth was due to a 16-percent improvement in gross net interest margin as the thrift bank expanded its balance sheet by 25 percent to P320.2 billion.

PSBank's gross loan book grew by 9 percent to P96.1 billion, fueled by auto and mortgage lending which rose by 13 percent and 9 percent, respectively. The higher loan portfolio was achieved in spite of the 0.2-percent decline in the vehicle industry's sales and the intense auto competition on mortgage loans, the bank said in its disclosure.

Investments in government securities also rose by 39 percent to P20.1 billion due to the increase in its lending base.

PSBank's deposits expanded by 16 percent in 2012, as it expanded its network with 16 additional locations to end the year with 200 branches. It also added 126 new automated teller machines (ATMs), 108 of which were in offsite locations.

The increase in its operating expenses was tempered at 7 percent despite increased spending for new branches, ATMs and IT infrastructure.

In terms of asset quality, PSBank was performing loan as a ratio to total loans hit 3.1 percent versus the 4.2 percent average ratio for the thrift banking industry as of end-September last year. Doris C. Dumlao

PPP schools project attracts 15 firms

From page B1

may be three different winners for the first phase. It is also possible that there may be one remaining company if its bids turn out to be the lowest for each package.

The deeds published in January the invitation to pre-qualify and aims to bid out the first phase of the project, which covers Luzon, in June. The deepest needs will be the classrooms under the three-phase project delivered by July 2013, in time for the start of the school year.

The second and third phases will cover Visayas and Mindanao.

Education Secretary Armin A. Luistro told reporters on the sidelines of the conference that the department was starting to identify target sites and was aiming to bid out the next two phases within 2013.

Public Works Secretary Rogelio L. Singson said the Philippines was now to using the PPP mode for school projects because said the move would gain traction as a new business model so that his department could focus on upgrading the country's roads and related infrastructure. Singson said the government was committing about 30,000 classrooms under the PPP School Infrastructure Project.

Local stocks resume climb

From page B1

The main index was led higher by Megaworld, Ayala land, DMCI, Alliance Global, SMC and HLDF. Other non-index stocks also gained in heavy volume like PSE, Pickrell, GMA Holdings, Rustan, Unicon and Universal Robina.

The diversified PSE surged 28 percent to 4955 a share and was the third most actively traded company in the market. Dealers said this could be due to a play on either good dividends given the robust equities markets last year or a play on prospective merger and acquisition given an international trend of cross-dividend investing.

On the other hand, the PSEi's advance was tempered by the decline of Metrobank, SM Investments, BDO, BDC, Globe and Cebu Air. There was likewise profit-taking on Security Bank.

A second bailout package finalized by the European Union for debt-stopped Greece worth $173 billion elevated risks of default. Doris C. Dumlao

Surging

From page B1

showing up precipitously. The European properties ban of oil imports from Iran has fueled concerns about possible retaliation in terms of supply disruptions," BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo said.

He said the BSP is heavily monitoring oil price developments offshore as it works on securing inflation is kept within the target for this year.

The BSP, which cut policy rates earlier this year, had said that it maintained a policy of supporting economic growth as long as inflation was kept within targets.

Guinigundo said that so far, the BSP still expected inflation to stay within the 3-5 percent target, less than diwa guinigundo, deputy governor, bsp

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PSE Stock Exchange

Currencies

February 21, 2013		Peso Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
Country	Unit			
United States	Dollar	1.000000	1.000000	41.0350
Japan	Yen	0.010637	0.010637	0.4365
United Kingdom	Pound	1.540000	1.540000	63.2054
Hongkong	Dollar	0.128955	0.128955	5.2909
Switzerland	Franc	1.060000	1.060000	43.4971
Canada	Dollar	0.990000	0.990000	40.6298
Singapore	Dollar	0.800000	0.800000	32.8280
Australia	Dollar	1.050000	1.050000	43.0967
Taiwan	Dollar	0.033000	0.033000	1.3541
South Korea	Won	0.000900	0.000900	0.0369
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.320000	0.320000	13.1312
Thailand	Baht	0.032000	0.032000	1.3131
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000100	0.000100	0.0041
Saudi Arabia	Riyal	0.266667	0.266667	10.9427
UAE	Dirham	0.272294	0.272294	11.1729
Kuwait	Dinar	3.540000	3.540000	145.2639
Bahrain	Dinar	2.650000	2.650000	108.7388
Qatar	Riyal	0.274725	0.274725	11.2717
Oman	Rial	2.600000	2.600000	106.6910
Iran	Rial	0.000033	0.000033	0.0014
Czech Republic	Koruna	0.052000	0.052000	2.1338
Hungary	Forint	0.004500	0.004500	0.1846
Poland	Zloty	0.320000	0.320000	13.1312
Sweden	Krona	0.160000	0.160000	6.5656
Norway	Krone	0.180000	0.180000	7.3863
Denmark	Krone	0.180000	0.180000	7.3863
Russia	Ruble	0.033000	0.033000	1.3541
Philippines	Peso	0.024000	0.024000	1.0000
Vietnam	Dong	0.000048	0.000048	0.0020
South Africa	Rand	0.120000	0.120000	4.9242
Brazil	Real	0.500000	0.500000	20.5175
Mexico	Peso	0.080000	0.080000	3.2828
Chile	Peso	0.002000	0.002000	0.0821
Europe	Euro	1.330000	1.330000	54.5866

Source: Bankers Association of the Philippines

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
CENTRAL OFFICE BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (REI)

The Department of Health, through its Central Office Bids and Awards Committee (COBAC), invites interested Consultants to apply for Eligibility and Shortlisting for the hereunder project funded by the Government of the Philippines (GOP):

Name of Project	Brief Description of the Project	Type	Approved Budget for the Contract (Phil. Peso)
Hiring of Consultancy Services for the Software Enhancement and System Maintenance of the Integrated Drugs Sale Operations and Management Information System (IDSOMIS) (REI-CS-DOH-2013-01)	To enhance the existing IDTOMIS version 3.0.10 version 10.0.0 and implement accordingly through provision of maintenance and operational support within a specified time frame	Fixed	Php 2,000,000.00

1. The DOH now calls for the submission of eligibility documents. Interested Consulting Firms must submit their Letter of Intent (LOI) to apply for eligibility and shortlisting for the above-consulting project on or before 5:00 p.m. 12 March 2013 at CP Building II, COBAC Conference Room, San Lazaro Compound, Sta. Cruz, Manila. Deadline of submission for eligibility documents shall be on the date of the opening of the eligibility Documents, 3 March 2013, 10:00 a.m. at 5/F Building II, COBAC Conference Room, San Lazaro Compound, Sta. Cruz, Manila. Applications for eligibility will be evaluated based on cross-discretionary "pass/fail" criterion.
2. The COBAC shall draw up the short list of consultants from those who have submitted eligibility documents/Expression of Interest and have been determined as eligible in accordance with the provisions of Republic Act 9184 (RA 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act", and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary "pass/fail" criterion as specified in the IRR of RA 9184, and is restricted to Filipino citizens or organization with at least sixty percent (60%) interest belonging to citizens of the Philippines. In accordance with Revised IRR of R.A. 9184, any bids from short-listed consultants will be opened. The contract will be awarded to the Highest Rated and Responsive Bidder who also demonstrates such during post-qualification.

   The criteria and rating system for the evaluation of bids shall be provided in the Instructions to Bidders.
4. The evaluation procedure to be adopted shall be Quality-Cost Based Evaluation (QCBE). Bids whose technical proposals pass the minimum technical rating of 75% shall have its financial proposals opened and evaluated.
5. Interested consultants may obtain further information from the Department of Health at the address given below from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Individual consultants interest expressed and noting the REI on the Portal/PS website, (www.philgeps.net) or through its candidate entries 02-31 to 36.

The DOH reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, to reject all Bids and may opt to contract without incurring any liability and retain no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of the Bidding. If the physical and economic conditions have significantly changed so as to render the project no longer economically, financially, or technically feasible as determined by the DOH, if the project is no longer necessary as determined by the DOH and when the funds for the programs/activities/projects have been withheld or reduced through no fault of the DOH at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

For further information, please refer to:

COBAC SECRETARIAT
Department of Health
2nd Floor Building II, San Lazaro Compound, Sta. Cruz, Manila 1003
Tel. No. 651-7800 Loc. 1035 / 1027; Telefax No. 743-8370
Website: www.doh.gov.ph; Email: cobacsecretariat@yahoo.com.ph

Approved by:

(Sgd.) ABRAHAM T. GAMIL, MD, MPH, CESO II
Assistant Secretary of Health
Chairperson, COBAC

(PB - Feb. 20, 2013)

Request for Interested Parties for Gas Station Operator in GGLC

Project Location

Located within Clark Freeport Zone, 170 hectares known as Global Gateway Logistics City, Spur Road 2, Industrial Cluster 1, Clark Freeport Zone, Pampanga, Philippines 2023

Project Name

Gas Plaza – Gas Station Operator

Project Description

GGLC is the country's first farmingpolis located at the main interchange to Clark Freeport Zone off the SCTEX toll road. It's poised to be country's largest and fastest growing airport. GGLC is a fully integrated and master-planned logistics/business park catering to cross-sectoral/big business interests. The Gas Plaza will be the first commercial development within GGLC and is located at the first interaction of the SCTEX, providing access to 100% of all traffic coming on and off the SCTEX Clark South exit.

Approximately 12 hectares of land, the Gas Plaza will be a high-end retail/commercial outlet providing convenience and destination shopping and commercial office space. Situated along a major thoroughfare the Gas Station is comprised of 1,000 sqm and is supported by 2,000 sqm of retail space for branded concessionaires with complementing office space.

In addition to serving routine traffic, the Gas Operator will also provide all GGLC project fuel requirements estimated to reserve of 40,000 liters annually.

GGLC is requesting all interested parties to contact:

John Rodero
Business Development Manager
Pangaea Development Corporation
0906 666 6666
jbrodero@pangaeaph.com

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Successful applicants will be contacted
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For more information, please call
0927-6265155

get hired

Calamba Water District

Calamba Premier Water Utility Company
Brgy. Parian, Calamba City, Laguna, Philippines 4027
Tel. Nos. (049) 545-0788 / 545-1655 / 545-1656 / 545-1657; Fax No. (049) 545-0789
Email Address: cwd_calamba@yahoo.com

Invitation to Bid

Supply and Delivery of 4100 pieces 12" Water Meter without Tailpiece and Nuts

1. The Calamba Water District (CWD) hereby invites bids for Supply and Delivery of 4100 pieces 12" Water Meter without Tailpiece and Nuts. Delivery is within 30 days. Bidders should have completed, within the last three (3) years from the date of submission and receipt of bids, a contract similar to the Project. The description of the eligible bidder is as stated in the Bidding Documents particularly, in Section II. Instructions to Bidders.
2. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using a non-discretionary "pass/fail" criterion as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act (RA) 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act". Bidding is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, partnerships, or organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to the Implementing Rules and Regulations of RA 9184.
3. Interested bidders may obtain further information from the Calamba Water District and review the Bidding Documents at the address given below during 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
4. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be acquired by interested bidders on February 21, 2013 up to 5:00 p.m. at the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P2,500.00. The Bidding Documents in the amount of P2,500.00 (Two Thousand Five Hundred Pesos Only) may be purchased from the Cashier's Office of the CWD.
5. Prospective bidders may attend the Pre-Bid Conference on February 26, 2013 @ 10:00 a.m. at the CWD Warehouse Building, Calamba Water District, Parian, Calamba City, which shall be open to all interested parties.
6. Bids must be delivered to the address below on or before 10:00 a.m. of March 7, 2013. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security in any of the acceptable forms and in the amount stated in ITB Clause 18.
7. Bid opening shall be on March 7, 2013 @ 10:00 a.m. at the CWD Warehouse Building, Calamba Water District, Parian, Calamba City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below. Late bids shall not be accepted.
8. The Calamba Water District reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.
9. For further information, please refer to:

Calamba Water District
Bids and Awards Committee
BAC Secretariat
Parian, Calamba City
Laguna, Philippines 4027
Tel. No. (049) 545-0788 / 545-1655 / 545-1656 / 545-1657
Fax No. (049) 545-0789
Email Address: cwd_calamba@yahoo.com
Website: www.calambawater.com

(Sgd.) ENGR. ALBERTO M. CESPEDES
General Manager

(BAC-Feb. 21, 2013)

OBITUARIES

GRACE BUSTARGA CASTELLANO

(Nee Lanzona)
Died peacefully on February 21, 2013
at the age of 61

The remains lie in state at Chapel Upper Ground 1, La Funeraria Paz, Co. Leviste, F. Ortigas, Jr. Road, Ortigas Center, Pasig City.

Funeral Assistance is on 104 Roosevelt Avenue, EDSA, Quezon City on Saturday, February 23, 2013 at 9:00 a.m. after which interment will follow at the Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque City.

Whosoever finds his life will lose it, and whosoever loses his life for My sake will find it.

Matthew 10:39

Message of Thanks

The bereaved wife, **Virginia**; children, **Lito** and **Marina**, **Ruby** and **Bob** (†), **Butch** and **Ita**, **Gee** and **Bunn**, **Ray** and **Jing**, and **Vina** and **Marcus**; grandchildren; sisters and brother; and other close friends and relatives of

LEONARDO G. LANZONA, SR., M.D.

who passed away in the Grace of our Lord on January 14, 2013 at the age of 85

wish to express their sincerest appreciation for the prayers, masses, flowers, visits, sympathies, other condolences and kind services at the time of their loss.

The family of the late Dr. Lanzona requests the reader to join them in praying for his eternal repose.

"Eternal rest grant unto Leonardo, and let perpetual light shine upon him. May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen."

Republic of the Philippines

COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS

Manila

RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE: 1) FILING OF PETITIONS FOR REGISTRATION; 2) FILING OF MANIFESTATION OF INTENT TO PARTICIPATE; 3) SUBMISSION OF NAMES OF NOMINEES; AND 4) FILING OF OPPOSITION/PETITION FOR DISQUALIFICATION CASES AGAINST NOMINEES OF PARTY-LIST GROUPS/ORGANIZATIONS/PARTICIPATING UNDER THE PARTY-LIST SYSTEM OF REPRESENTATION IN CONNECTION WITH THE MAY 13, 2013 NATIONAL AND LOCAL ELECTIONS, AND SUBSEQUENT ELECTIONS THEREAFTER.

SIXTO S. BRILLANTES, JR. Chairman
RENE V. SARMIENTO Commissioner
LUCENITO N. TAGLE Commissioner
ARMANDO C. VELASCO Commissioner
ELIAS R. YUSOPH Commissioner
CHRISTIAN ROBERT S. LIM Commissioner
AUGUSTO C. LAGMAN Commissioner

Promulgated: February 21, 2013

RESOLUTION NO. 9366

The Commission on Elections (Commission), by virtue of the powers vested in it by the Constitution, the Omnibus Election Code (Republic Act No. 7166, otherwise known as "The Party-List System Act", and other election laws, RESOLVED to promulgate, as it hereby RESOLVED to promulgate the following RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE: 1) FILING OF PETITIONS FOR REGISTRATION; 2) FILING OF MANIFESTATION OF INTENT TO PARTICIPATE; 3) SUBMISSION OF NAMES OF NOMINEES; AND 4) FILING OF OPPOSITION/PETITION FOR DISQUALIFICATION CASES AGAINST NOMINEES OF PARTY-LIST GROUPS/ORGANIZATIONS/PARTICIPATING UNDER THE PARTY-LIST SYSTEM OF REPRESENTATION IN CONNECTION WITH THE MAY 13, 2013 NATIONAL AND LOCAL ELECTIONS, AND SUBSEQUENT ELECTIONS THEREAFTER.

RULE I
FILING OF PETITIONS FOR REGISTRATION

SEC. 1. Registration requirement. – Only registered groups duly registered with the Commission, and which have manifested their desire to participate in the party-list elections, may participate in the Party-List System of Representation in the May 2013 national elections.

SEC. 2. Who may file petition for registration. – Organized groups and not registered with the Commission may file a petition for registration under the party-list system. An registered group already registered cannot not register anew. Known as it has filed with the Commission a manifestation of intent to participate in the party-list election process in Rule II hereof.

Parties or groups defeated may file anew a verified petition for registration. Provided, however, that in case of change of name of the group, it shall inform the Commission of the change not later than sixty (60) days before the election.

SEC. 3. Who may participate. – The following organized groups may participate in the party-list system:

a) **Sectoral party** – an organized group of citizens whose individual members belong to the marginalized and underrepresented sectors of the following sectors: Labor, Peasant, Urban Poor, Indigenous Cultural Communities, Elderly, Handicapped, Women, Youth, Overseas Workers, Fisherfolk, Veterans, and Professionals;

b) **Sectoral organization** – a group of qualified voters bound together by certain physical attributes or characteristics, or by employment, interests or concerns;

c) **Political party** – an organized group of qualified voters pursuing the same ideology, political ideas and principles for the general conduct of the government.

Every national party which its constituency is spread over the geographical territory of at least a majority of the regions. It is a regional party when its constituency is spread over the geographical territory of at least a majority of the cities and provinces comprising the region.

d) **Coalition** – an aggregation of any organized national, regional, sectoral parties or organizations for political and/or electoral purposes.

SEC. 4. Where to file petition for registration. – The verified petition for registration by any of the above-mentioned organized groups, signed by their President/Chairman or Secretary, in the absence of the President, shall be filed with the Office of the Clerk of the Commission, Commission on Elections, Manila, in twelve (12) legible copies.

Petitions filed by mail, telegram or facsimile shall not be accepted.

In case two separate petitions are filed for the same organized group, one signed by the President/Chairman and the other by the Secretary General, both petitions shall be dismissed.

SEC. 5. When to file petition for registration. – Petitions for registration shall be filed not later than the last working day of March of the year immediately preceding the next regular national and local elections during regular working hours.

SEC. 6. Petition for Registration Contents. – The petition for registration shall be verified and shall contain the following material allegations of the petitioner, with the accompanying documents, if any:

a) The name of the organization, whether it is a sectoral party, sectoral organization, political party or coalition; c) the sector or sectors which it seeks to represent; d) the name and address of the nominee of the organization appearing in the list of names submitted and registered for the party in the petition; e) petitioner's principal headquarters and post-office address; f) names, positions, and addresses of the elected officers of petitioner's governing body or boards; g) the party-list election, by name and date of each of its chapter offices; i) that all of the officers and members are made aware of the petition and have given their consent thereto; j) the list of nominees of the organization, if any, and their manifestation of conformity to the sectoral parties or organizations affiliated with the petitioner which affiliations need not be registered with the Commission), but have given their consent thereto; k) that it is not a religious sect or denomination, organization or association organized for religious purposes, nor that it shall not advocate violence or unlawful means to publicize its goals, or that it is not an adjunct or a project organized or an entity formed for assistance by the government; m) that it is not a foreign party or organization or receive support from any foreign government, foreign political party, foundation, organization, whether directly or through any of its officers or members or indirectly through third parties for partisan election purposes; n) that it shall comply with laws, rules or regulations relating to elections; o) that the petition is not filed to put the election process in mockery or disrepute, or to cause confusion among the voters by the similarity of names or registered parties, or by other circumstances or acts which clearly indicate that this petition has been filed for the purpose or intent to mislead the voters or to cause confusion among the voters by the similarity of the names of the registered parties; and p) that the petitioner has not violated or failed to comply with any of the preceding requirements.

SEC. 7. Removal and/or cancellation of registration/ Grounds. – The Commission may motu propio or upon a verified complaint by any interested party, remove or cancel registration of any party, organization or coalition on the following grounds: a) it is a religious sect or denomination, organization or association organized for religious purposes; b) it advocates violence or unlawful means to achieve its goal; c) that it is an adjunct of, or a project or an entity funded or assisted by the government; d) it is a foreign party or organization; e) it is receiving support from any foreign government, foreign political party, foundation, organization, whether directly or indirectly or extended or through its officers or members or indirectly through third parties for partisan election purposes; f) violates or fails to comply with laws, rules or regulations relating to elections; g) it has made untruthful statements in its Petition; h) it has ceased to exist for a period of at least one (1) year; i) it fails to participate in the last two (2) preceding elections for the constituency (if it is a party) it has registered; or j) the petition has been filed to put the election process in mockery or disrepute, or to cause confusion among the voters by the similarity of names or registered parties, or by other circumstances or acts which clearly indicate that the petition has been filed for the purpose or intent to mislead the voters or to cause confusion among the voters by the similarity of the names of the registered parties, or the petitioner has not been able to represent the sector for which the petition has been filed or has prevented a bona fide determination of the true and other grounds.

SEC. 8. Effect of Failure to File Manifestation of Intent to Participate. – Upon receipt of the petition from the Office of the Clerk of the Commission, the Commission shall require the petitioner to submit at its expense in two (2) additional transcripts of general circulation duly accredited by the Commission the following:

a) The petition;

b) Manifestation of intent to participate;

c) List of nominees and certificate of nomination; and

d) Order of the Commission requiring the publication with the date of the hearing of the petition.

The Commission, after due notice and hearing, shall motu the petition within fifteen (15) days from the date it was submitted for resolution but not later than the last working day of September of the year immediately preceding the next regular national and local elections. Excluded resolutions of motions for reconsideration resolved by the Commission en banc.

RULE II
OPPOSITION TO A PETITION FOR DISQUALIFICATION

SEC. 1. Opposition to petition for registration after effectivity No. – A verified opposition to a petition for registration may be filed with the Office of the Clerk of the Commission, Commission on Elections, Manila, by any interested party on any of the grounds mentioned in Section 7 hereof.

SEC. 2. Grounds for opposition to a petition for registration. – The Commission may deny due course to the petition made pursuant to upon written opposition of any interested party, after due notice and hearing, on any of the following grounds:

a) It is a religious sect or denomination, organization or association organized for religious purposes;

b) It advocates violence or unlawful means to achieve its goal;

c) That it is an adjunct of, or a project or an entity funded or assisted by the government;

d) It is a foreign party or organization;

e) It is receiving support from any foreign government, foreign political party, foundation, organization, whether directly or extended or through its officers or members or indirectly through third parties for partisan election purposes;

f) It violates or fails to comply with laws, rules or regulations relating to elections;

g) It has made untruthful statements in its Petition;

h) It has ceased to exist for a period of at least one (1) year;

i) It fails to participate in the last two (2) preceding elections or fails to obtain at least four per cent (4%) of the votes cast under the party-list system in the last (1) preceding elections for the constituency (if which it was registered); or

j) The petition has been filed to put the election process in mockery or disrepute, or to cause confusion among the voters by the similarity of names or registered parties, or by other circumstances or acts which clearly indicate that the petition has been filed for the purpose or intent to mislead the voters or to cause confusion among the voters by the similarity of the names of the registered parties, or the petitioner has not been able to represent the sector for which the petition has been filed or has prevented a bona fide determination of the true and other grounds.

SEC. 3. Who may file opposition to petition for disqualification. – Any verified opposition to a petition for disqualification may be filed with the Office of the Clerk of the Commission, Commission on Elections, Manila, by any interested party on any of the grounds mentioned in Section 6 hereof.

SEC. 4. Contents of opposition. – The opposition shall be verified and shall contain the following material allegations of the petitioner, with the accompanying documents, if any:

a) The name of the organization, whether it is a sectoral party, sectoral organization, political party or coalition; c) the sector or sectors which it seeks to represent; d) the name and address of the nominee of the organization appearing in the list of names submitted and registered for the party in the petition; e) petitioner's principal headquarters and post-office address; f) names, positions, and addresses of the elected officers of petitioner's governing body or boards; g) the party-list election, by name and date of each of its chapter offices; i) that all of the officers and members are made aware of the petition and have given their consent thereto; j) the list of nominees of the organization, if any, and their manifestation of conformity to the sectoral parties or organizations affiliated with the petitioner which affiliations need not be registered with the Commission), but have given their consent thereto; k) that it is not a religious sect or denomination, organization or association organized for religious purposes, nor that it shall not advocate violence or unlawful means to publicize its goals, or that it is not an adjunct or a project organized or an entity formed for assistance by the government; m) that it is not a foreign party or organization or receive support from any foreign government, foreign political party, foundation, organization, whether directly or indirectly or through its officers or members or indirectly through third parties for partisan election purposes; n) that it shall comply with laws, rules or regulations relating to elections; o) that the petition is not filed to put the election process in mockery or disrepute, or to cause confusion among the voters by the similarity of names or registered parties, or by other circumstances or acts which clearly indicate that this petition has been filed for the purpose or intent to mislead the voters or to cause confusion among the voters by the similarity of the names of the registered parties, or the petitioner has not been able to represent the sector for which the petition has been filed or has prevented a bona fide determination of the true and other grounds.

SEC. 5. Effect of Failure to File Manifestation of Intent to Participate. – Upon receipt of the petition from the Office of the Clerk of the Commission, the Commission shall require the petitioner to submit at its expense in two (2) additional transcripts of general circulation duly accredited by the Commission the following:

a) The petition;

b) Manifestation of intent to participate;

c) List of nominees and certificate of nomination; and

d) Order of the Commission requiring the publication with the date of the hearing of the petition.

The Commission, after due notice and hearing, shall motu the petition within fifteen (15) days from the date it was submitted for resolution but not later than the last working day of September of the year immediately preceding the next regular national and local elections. Excluded resolutions of motions for reconsideration resolved by the Commission en banc.

RULE III
OPPOSITION TO A PETITION FOR DISQUALIFICATION

SEC. 1. Opposition to petition for registration after effectivity No. – A verified opposition to a petition for registration may be filed with the Office of the Clerk of the Commission, Commission on Elections, Manila, by any interested party on any of the grounds mentioned in Section 7 hereof.

SEC. 2. Grounds for opposition to a petition for registration. – The Commission may deny due course to the petition made pursuant to upon written opposition of any interested party, after due notice and hearing, on any of the following grounds:

a) It is a religious sect or denomination, organization or association organized for religious purposes;

b) It advocates violence or unlawful means to achieve its goal;

c) That it is an adjunct of, or a project or an entity funded or assisted by the government;

d) It is a foreign party or organization;

e) It is receiving support from any foreign government, foreign political party, foundation, organization, whether directly or extended or through its officers or members or indirectly through third parties for partisan election purposes;

f) It violates or fails to comply with laws, rules or regulations relating to elections;

g) It has made untruthful statements in its Petition;

h) It has ceased to exist for a period of at least one (1) year;

i) It fails to participate in the last two (2) preceding elections or fails to obtain at least four per cent (4%) of the votes cast under the party-list system in the last (1) preceding elections for the constituency (if which it was registered); or

j) The petition has been filed to put the election process in mockery or disrepute, or to cause confusion among the voters by the similarity of names or registered parties, or by other circumstances or acts which clearly indicate that the petition has been filed for the purpose or intent to mislead the voters or to cause confusion among the voters by the similarity of the names of the registered parties, or the petitioner has not been able to represent the sector for which the petition has been filed or has prevented a bona fide determination of the true and other grounds.

SEC. 3. Who may file opposition to petition for disqualification. – Any verified opposition to a petition for disqualification may be filed with the Office of the Clerk of the Commission, Commission on Elections, Manila, by any interested party on any of the grounds mentioned in Section 6 hereof.

SEC. 4. Contents of opposition. – The opposition shall be verified and shall contain the following material allegations of the petitioner, with the accompanying documents, if any:

a) Name and address of the petitioner;

b) Grounds relied upon for the petition;

c) Specific allegations of fact supporting the petition;

d) Evidence to be presented by the petitioner;

e) Prior cases, if any, between the petitioner and the respondent; and

f) Such other matters as may be relevant to the petition.

SEC. 5. Petition to deny due course to a manifestation of intent to participate. – A verified petition seeking to deny due course to a manifestation of intent to participate may be filed with the Office of the Clerk of the Commission, Commission on Elections, Manila, by any interested party within five (5) days from the date of publication of the manifestation of intent to participate on any of the grounds mentioned in Section 7 of these Rules, if the previously registered party-list groups.

For groups seeking registration, the last day for filing of petition to deny due course to a manifestation of intent to participate shall be three by any interested party not later than last working day of March of the year immediately preceding the elections. For purposes of the May 13, 2013 national and local elections, the petition shall be filed not later than May 31, 2012.

RULE IV
PARTY-LIST NOMINEES

SEC. 1. Qualifications of nominees. – A party list nominee must be:

1. A natural-born citizen of the Philippines;
2. A registered voter;
3. A resident of the Philippines for a period of not less than one (1) year immediately preceding election day;
4. Able to read and write;
5. A bona fide member of the party he seeks to represent for at least ninety days preceding election day;
6. At least twenty-five (25) years of age;
7. A Filipino citizen who belongs to the marginalized and underrepresented sector which his election party organization, political party or coalition seeks to represent; and
8. Able to contribute to the formulation and enactment of appropriate legislation that will benefit his nation as a whole.

In case of the youth sector, he must be at least twenty-five (25) but not more than thirty (30) years of age on the day of the election. Any youth sectoral representative who attains the age of thirty (30) during his term shall be allowed to continue in office until the expiration of his term.

The party-list group and the nominees must submit documentary evidence to prove compliance with the Constitution, R.A. 7941 and other laws to duly prove that the nominees truly belong to the sector they seek to represent and understand its needs. The nominee party, organization, political party or coalition they seek to represent, which may include but not limited to the following:

a. Track record of the party, the group/organization should positive participation of the nominees in the undertaking of the party the group/organization for the advancement of the marginalized and underrepresented sectors, the nominee party, organization, political party or coalition they seek to represent;

b. Proofs that the nominee is truly adherent to the advocacies of the party the group/organization, given declarations, positions, written articles, and such other relevant documents that will serve as evidence of his/her adherence to the advocacies of the party and group/organization;

c. Certification that the nominee's sister or one bona fide member of the party the group/organization for at least ninety (90) days prior to the election; and

d. In case of a party-list group/organization seeking representation of the marginalized and underrepresented sectors, proof that the nominee is not only an advocate of the party he/she/it represents but rather also a bona fide member of the said marginalized and underrepresented sector.

SEC. 2. Disqualifications Filed. – Any aggrieved party may, within five (5) days after the filing of the certificate of nomination, file a petition to disqualify and to deny due course or to cancel such certificate of nomination. The petition may be filed on the following grounds:

a. Fraud, duress or other forms of vitiation of consent;

b. Failure to comply with the nomination rules provided in Section 8 hereof;

c. Nuisance candidate who has been disqualified to run for the elections pursuant to Section 69 of the Omnibus Election Code;

d. Ineligible nominee.

SEC. 3. Effect of Non-Filing of Petitions. – Any petition for disqualification against any nominee shall be filed within the period specified herein. Any petition not filed within the said period shall not be given due course.

SEC. 4. Withdrawal of nomination. – Any party, organization or coalition may withdraw its nomination for any of its nominees at any time before the election. For this purpose, a manifestation of withdrawal signed by the party, organization or coalition chairman or secretary general and the nominee concerned must be filed with the Commission.

SEC. 5. Withdrawal of petition. – The petitioner may withdraw his petition at any time before the election. For this purpose, a manifestation of withdrawal signed by the petitioner and his counsel must be filed with the Commission.

SEC. 6. Substitution. – Substitution of nominees disqualified, withdrawn, deceased, or otherwise rendered ineligible for or unable to serve shall be allowed only if such nominee belongs to the same party, organization or coalition mentioned in the certificate of nomination submitted before the election. For this purpose, a manifestation to substitute signed by the party, organization or coalition chairman or secretary general and the substitute nominee must be filed with the Commission.

SEC. 7. Effect of disqualification case. – Any candidate who has been declared disqualified by final judgment before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the disqualified candidate shall be declared elected.

SEC. 8. Effect of withdrawal of nomination. – Any candidate who withdraws his certificate of nomination before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn candidate shall be declared elected.

SEC. 9. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 10. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 11. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 12. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 13. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 14. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 15. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 16. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 17. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 18. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 19. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 20. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 21. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 22. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 23. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 24. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 25. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 26. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 27. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 28. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 29. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 30. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 31. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 32. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 33. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 34. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 35. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 36. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 37. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 38. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 39. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 40. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 41. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 42. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 43. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 44. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 45. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 46. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 47. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 48. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 49. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 50. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 51. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 52. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 53. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 54. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 55. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 56. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 57. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 58. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 59. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 60. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 61. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 62. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 63. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 64. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 65. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 66. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 67. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 68. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 69. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 70. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 71. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 72. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 73. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 74. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 75. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 76. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 77. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 78. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 79. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 80. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 81. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 82. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 83. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 84. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

SEC. 85. Effect of withdrawal of petition. – Any petitioner who withdraws his petition before the election shall not be voted for, and votes cast for him shall not be counted. If he is voted for the office, the candidate who obtained the highest number of votes next to the withdrawn petitioner shall be declared elected.

**SEC.

provisions, the following procedures shall be observed:

1) A verified petition to disqualify a party-list nominee shall be filed in the COMELEC proper, personally or through a duly authorized representative, by any person or campaign or duly organized political party, organization or coalition of political parties, or party-list group or organization.

2) Petitioner shall, before the filing of the petition, furnish a copy of the petition through personal service to the respondent. In case personal service is not feasible, or the respondent refuses to receive the petition without any justifiable reason, substituted service is permitted. The petitioner shall execute an affidavit stating the measures or circumstances therefore.

3) The proof of service of the affidavit shall be attached to the petition to be filed with the Office of the Clerk of the Commission.

4) Upon payment of the filing fee of Php 10,000.00 and through receipt in lieu of Php 100.00, the Office of the Clerk of the Commission shall issue summons with notice of hearing through personal or telegram, facsimile or telegraphic means, means of communication, to the respondent and notice of hearing to the petitioner.

5) Within three (3) calendar days from receipt of summons, the respondent shall personally or through his authorized representative, file his verified answer to a Motion to Dismiss or the petition, at the Office of the Clerk of the Commission in twenty (20) legible copies, with proof of personal service of answer upon the petitioner.

Grounds for Motion to Dismiss may be limited to an Affirmative Defense.

7) The proceeding shall be summary in nature. In lieu of oral hearings, the parties shall submit the affidavits of their witnesses and other documentary evidence in support together with their position papers or memoranda.

The position paper is memorandum must particularly contain the following:

a. A "Statement of the Case", which is a clear and concise statement of the nature of the petition, a summary of the documentary evidence, and other matters necessary to an understanding of the controversy;

b. A "Statement of the Facts", which is a clear and concise statement of the facts;

c. The "Argument", which is a clear and concise discussion of the arguments in support of each issue; and

d. The "Relief", which is a specification of the judgment which the party seeks to obtain. Issues not raised in the pleadings filed and included in the memorandum shall be deemed waived or abandoned. The Commission may consider the memorandum alone notwithstanding or requiring the submission of additional documents or examination of the parties' pleadings and documentary evidence.

SEC. 5. Motu proprio notice. - The Commission may, at any time before proclamation, issue, motu proprio, the notice and show cause motion for summary to Section 6, Rule 4 of this Resolution.

Upon receipt of the list of nominees, the Law Department shall, within three (3) days from the last date of filing of the list of nominees, forward to the Commission through the Office of the Commission Secretary, the list of nominees for summary evaluation.

Thereafter, the Law Department shall, within the shortest time possible, submit a full study and evaluation of the nominees and forward the same to the Office of the Commission Secretary whether or not the conditions in subsection Section 6, Rule 4 have been met.

The Commission Secretary shall upon receipt thereof, immediately calendar for deliberation the list of nominees together with the study and recommendation of the Law Department with notice to all members of the Commission.

Within 15 days from the date of the deliberation, the Commission shall resolve all matters relative to the list of nominees submitted to it.

The Resolution disqualifying the nominee or party-list nominee shall be published in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

SEC. 7. Proclamation. - The promulgation of a Decision or Resolution (After Commission's Decision shall be made by delivering a copy thereof to the Clerk of the Commission, a notice of which shall be posted on the bulletin or their electronic accounts, or by registered mail, telegram, fax or like first-hand means of communication.

SEC. 8. Effects of petition if proclaimed before completion of hearing. - If the petition for cancellation and disqualification is not resolved before the completion of the canvass, the votes cast for the party-list group or organization shall be included in the counting and, after canvassing, however, if the evidence is strong, the proclamation of the nominee shall be suspended notwithstanding the fact that the group or organization received the winning number of votes in such election.

Rule 7
COMMON PROVISIONS

SEC. 1. Suspension of the Summary Rules of Procedure. - In the interest of justice, the Commission may suspend, motu proprio or motu, the application of the Summary Rules of Procedure or any portion thereof (unconstitutionality is hereby suspended).

SEC. 2. Motion for Reconsideration. - A motion to reconsider a Decision, Resolution, Order or Ruling of a Division shall be filed within three (3) days from receipt thereof. Such motion, if not pro-forma, suspends the execution or implementation of the Decision, Resolution, Order or Ruling.

Within twenty-four (24) hours from the filing thereof, the Clerk of the Commission shall forward a copy of the motion to the adverse party.

The Office of the Clerk of the Commission shall calendar the Motion for Reconsideration of the nominee of the Commission en banc within three (3) days from certification thereof.

SEC. 3. Filing fee for Motion for Reconsideration. - There shall be a payment of filing fee of Php 1,000.00 for every Motion for Reconsideration filed in the Office of the Clerk of the Commission.

Additional filing fees shall be charged if there are more than one (1) respondent at Php 1,000.00 for each respondent named.

SEC. 4. Assignment of counsel de oficio counsel. - Counsel de oficio or counsel de oficio counsel shall be appointed by the Commission en banc upon motion of the party concerned with pending Commission rules and regulations on the grant of free legal assistance.

SEC. 5. Effectivity. - This Resolution shall take effect seven (7) days after its publication or two (2) daily newspapers of general circulation in the Philippines.

The Executive and Information Department of the Commission shall cause the publication of this Resolution in two (2) daily newspapers of general circulation in the Philippines.

SEC. 6. Dissemination. - The Education and Information Department (Atty. Commission shall furnish copies of this Resolution to all field offices of the Commission, the President, Chairman or vice chairman, the Secretary-General of all political organizations or coalitions duly accredited by the said to be bonafide of representations.

SO ORDERED.

(Sgd.) BENJAMIN S. ABALOS, SR.
Chairman

(Sgd.) RENE V. SARMIENTO
Commissioner

(Sgd.) LUCENITO N. TAGLE
Commissioner

(Sgd.) ARMANDO C. VELASCO
Commissioner

(Sgd.) ELIAS R. YUSOPH
Commissioner

(Sgd.) CHRISTIAN ROBERT S. LIM
Commissioner

(Sgd.) A.M. TARROSA V. LIM
Commissioner

(PIA-Fax 31-2012)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Agriculture
ARTEMIO L. MANGUIAT ADMINISTRATION
Apo View Integrated Irrigation Project
Tinikan Hall, Toledo, Philippines

(Thursday, 23, 2012)

INVITATION TO BID: RE: AVIP-LBS (2012)
CONSTRUCTION OF SERVICE ROAD (CONCRETE AND ASPHALT PAVING STRUCTURES)
UNDER THE SAMA-SAMA MOUNT TAGUBO IRRIGATION PROJECT

1. The National Irrigation Administration - Apo View Integrated Irrigation Project through the Sama-Sama Mount Tagubo Irrigation Project, is now the duly and valid NFA/AMC for the Sama-Sama Mount Tagubo Irrigation Project (SMTIP) for the construction of Service Road (Concrete and Asphalt Paving Structures) under the Sama-Sama Mount Tagubo Irrigation Project (SMTIP) and invites bids for the following:

Schedule	Brief Description of Work	Classification	Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)	Contract Duration
1	Construction of 3,000 M.S.L. Road (Concrete Pavement) Phase I, Sta. 0+000 - Sta. 3+000	Category A	P 10,000,000.00	180 d.c.
2	Construction of 3,000 M.S.L. Road (Concrete Pavement) Phase II, Sta. 3+000 - Sta. 6+000	Category A	P 10,000,000.00	180 d.c.
3	Construction of 3,000 M.S.L. Road (Concrete Pavement) Phase III, Sta. 6+000 - Sta. 9+000	Category A	P 10,000,000.00	180 d.c.
4	Construction of 3,000 M.S.L. Road (Concrete Pavement) Phase IV, Sta. 9+000 - Sta. 12+000	Category A	P 10,000,000.00	180 d.c.
5	Construction of 3,000 M.S.L. Road (Concrete Pavement) Phase V, Sta. 12+000 - Sta. 15+000	Category A	P 10,000,000.00	180 d.c.
6	Construction of 3,000 M.S.L. Road (Concrete Pavement) Phase VI, Sta. 15+000 - Sta. 18+000	Category A	P 10,000,000.00	180 d.c.

2. The contract shall be governed by Republic Act (RA) No. 9184 and its implementing rules and regulations (IRR).

3. Bidding shall be open to all interested contractors, whether local or foreign, duly licensed by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) and registered with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) or Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) as appropriate, and shall be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as defined in RA 9184 and its IRR.

4. Bidding documents may be purchased from the address below upon payment of a non-refundable fee for the bidding documents in the amount of Five Thousand Pesos (P5,000.00).

5. The bidding documents may be inspected during office hours from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM at the address below.

6. A pre-bid conference shall be held on March 1, 2012 at 10:00 AM at the Project Manager's Office, which shall be open to all interested parties, who are advised to attend.

7. Bids must be delivered on or before March 15, 2012 at 10:00 AM at the Project Manager's Office. Late bids shall not be accepted. Bids will be opened in public at the address below and in the presence of the bidders' representatives who choose to attend.

8. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security in any of the acceptable forms and in the amount stated in ITB Clause 18.

9. The Sama-Sama Irrigation Administration - Apo View Integrated Irrigation Project reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

For further information, please refer to:

(Sgd.) EDUARDO T. APIN-AFIS
Chairman

(PIA-Fax 31-2012)

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT OF CAPIZ
City of Roxas, Province of Capiz
(036) 6215-2342

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Provincial Government of Capiz thru its BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE invites interested suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the project:

Name of Contract : Procurement of Agricultural Backpumps (5 Equipment)

Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) : P13,500,000.00
Source of Fund : Gil-Roxas Program

BAC Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of Eligibility Documents	February 23, 2012
2. Issuance of Bid Documents	February 23, 2012
3. Pre-Bid Conference	March 01, 2012, 09:00 AM
4. Opening of Bids	March 15, 2012, 09:00 AM

1. In order to qualify for participation in the public bidding, bidders should submit the following eligibility requirements as prescribed by the Implementing Rules and Regulations of the Republic Act 9184:

2. The BAC will issue to prospective bidders Eligibility Forms of BAC Office, Provincial Capitol, Roxas City upon submission of the prescribed non-refundable fee of P5,000.00. Check payable to City Treasurer of Roxas (Capiz).

3. Bidders shall draw their duly accomplished eligibility requirements & technical proposals that can be presented on two separate envelopes on the bid boxes before the deadline of submission of bids.

4. Bidders must be accompanied by a bid security in a form of cash and must be dropped at the BAC drop box on or before the closing date of bid March 15, 2012, 09:00 am.

5. BAC Committee assumes no responsibility whatsoever to bidders who, on opportunity, be delayed for any reasons in the presentation of their bids.

6. BAC Committee reserves the right to reject any and all bid proposals, or declare the bidding a failure or not to award the contract, and forfeits any insurance there contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) EDUARDO T. APIN-AFIS
Chairman

(PIA-Fax 31-2012)

More Classifieds

City of Lapu-Lapu A22
DOLE-NCR A22
BOI-BTI - Han Yeong Plastic Corp. A23
Dep-Ed Division of Samar A23

MAY TRABAHO DITO! Advertise in PHILSTAR Daily

REPUBLIKA NG PILIPINAS
KAGAWARAN NG KALAKALAN AT INDUSTRIYA
PAMBANSANG LUPAIN NG KAPULUAN NG LUPAIN
(LAND REGISTRATION AUTHORITY)
East Avenue cor. NIA Road
Quezon City

LRA CIRCULAR No. : 04-2012

SUBJECT: SUPPLEMENT TO LRA CIRCULAR NO. 20-2010 ON THE IMPLEMENTATION AND USE OF PARCEL IDENTIFICATION AND CERTIFICATION SERVICES USING THE PHILIPPINE LAND ADMINISTRATION AND INFORMATION SYSTEM IN THE REGISTRIES OF DEEDS

1. Pursuant to the provisions of Section 4 of Republic Act No. 9470 creating the Land Registration Authority (LRA), and Section 10 of Presidential Decree No. 1529 otherwise known as the Property Registration Decree, the LRA is the central agency tasked to administer and adjudicate all matters relating to the registration of lands, subdivision, consolidation, consolidation-subdivision, condominium and mortgage of real estate, and to issue certificates of title pursuant to the Torrens system of registration.

2. Section 2 of Republic Act No. 9470 also mandates the LRA to undertake the systematization of land titles and records in order to promote the speedy and efficient titling of lands and recording of transactions affecting title to lands.

3. Pursuant to the foregoing mandates, the LRA has developed the Philippine Land Administration and Information System (PLAIS) which is designed to computerize the land registration system in the country and to establish a nationwide network of land information.

4. Section 3 of Republic Act No. 9470 also mandates the LRA to promote the use of modern technology in land registration and conveyancing in order to minimize delay, reduce costs and improve efficiency in the delivery of services.

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10. Section 3 of Republic Act No. 9470 also mandates the LRA to promote the use of modern technology in land registration and conveyancing in order to minimize delay, reduce costs and improve efficiency in the delivery of services.

(Sgd.) ATTY. ANNA MARIE T. TORRES
Administrator

(PIA-Fax 31-2012)

REPUBLIKA NG PILIPINAS
KAGAWARAN NG KALAKALAN
PAMBANSANG LUPAIN NG KAPULUAN NG LUPAIN
(LAND REGISTRATION AUTHORITY)
East Avenue cor. NIA Road
Quezon City

LRA CIRCULAR No. 05-2012

SUBJECT: COLLECTION OF IT SERVICE FEES PURSUANT TO THE IMPLEMENTING GUIDELINES ON TRANSACTIONS ON ELECTRONIC REGISTRATION OF CERTAIN INSTRUMENTS AFFECTING REGISTERED PROPERTIES ELECTRONIC PROCESSING OF TRANSACTIONS ON UNREGISTERED LAND (ELECTRONIC REGISTRATION OF LAND TITLES AND DEEDS)

1. Upon the issuance by the Authority of appropriate administrative Orders, IT Service Fees, exclusive of Documentary Stamp Tax, shall be collected for transactions involving electronic registration of certain mortgage and other personal properties, electronic recording of transactions on unregistered land, and electronic registration of land titles and deeds, as follows:

   a. IT Service Fee for the Entry in Electronic Primary Entry Book - P50.00 per document entered for transactions limited to one lot/title per the entry in the Electronic Primary Entry Book; provided, that such entry shall also contain not more than two (2) parties to the transaction; provided further, that the IT Service Fee for the Registration of Deeds are already collected; and

   b. IT Service Fee for Recording of Annotations - P 50.00 per annotation of each subsisting encumbrance of a title to a new one; and for annotations on titles in excess of two (2) parties to the transaction, P50.00 per party in excess of two (2).

2. Upon the issuance by the Authority of appropriate administrative Orders, IT Service Fees, exclusive of documentary Tax, shall be collected for transactions involving the issuance of certifications and certified true copies, and for verifications made, as follows:

   a. IT Service Fee for the Issuance of ISO Certificates - P 50.00 per title, instrument, and document certified or regardless of the pages in a certification issued;

   b. IT Service Fee for Research Transactions - in the case of certifications, certified true copies, and verifications made on the records of titles which are available in a Regional Unit Office, Extension Unit Office, outreach, or document humanities) through the network, regardless of the number of pages or type of document being processed for;

   c. IT Service Fee for Portal verifications and certifications - P50.00 per portal certified and verification; and

   d. IT Service Fee chargeable for each page in excess of the first 2 pages in the issuance of Tax Clear and Authorization Plans, Technical Descriptions, Certificates of Registration, Certificates of Title, and other documents - 50% of the base fee subject of various publications or IT Service Fees.

3. The above-enumerated fees shall be subject to Value-Added Tax.

4. This Circular shall take effect after fifteen (15) days from its publication in a newspaper of general circulation, and the filing of three (3) copies hereof with the University of the Philippines Law Center.

(Sgd.) ATTY. ANNA MARIE T. TORRES
Administrator

(PIA-Fax 31-2012)

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BUSINESS

NGCP eyes P36-B power project

By Amy R. Nunez

THE NATIONAL Grid Corp. of the Philippines, operator of the national transmission network, is eyeing to undertake the P36-billion Cebu-Negros-Panay interconnection project to absorb the additional 420 megawatts in new capacity that will be installed in Panay by 2016.

In a briefing yesterday, Ground B.A. Galang, NGCP deputy department manager, explained that the proposed project involves the construction of a 230-kilovolt backbone and the installation of 50 kilometers of submarine and 133 kilometers of overhead cables.

This infrastructure can accommodate an additional 600 MW.

Galang said, however, that the huge project was being weighed against a cheaper alternative—the P2.8 billion Negros-Panay Interconnection Upgrading Project (NPUP) Phase 2—which can accommodate 90 MW in new capacity.

The NPUP Phase 2 will allow power interchange between Negros and Panay, which means that the contracted supply from power plants outside Panay can be reliably transported to customers in Panay.

Currently, contracted supply from power plants in Panay can't be reliably transported to customers outside Panay.

Also, the project is expected to ensure reliable power supply and voltage regulation, particularly in Negros Occidental, where there are few power plants.

According to Galang, the Cebu-Negros-Panay interconnection project would also be a good option as it can accommodate a bigger capacity if indeed all the proposed power plants that would generate that 420 MW will go online by 2016.

However, the project cost is a huge consideration since any investment that NGCP will make will have to be recovered from the consumers.

According to Galang, the Cebu-Negros-Panay interconnection project may be deferred if the power plants will be constructed in ideal locations, which are closer to the load centers, or areas of high electricity use, to avoid longer and more expensive interconnection projects.

PH international air travel sector grew in '11

By Paolo G. Montecillo

THE COUNTRY'S international air travel sector grew by nearly a tenth in 2011, outpacing the growth of the global aviation sector, which suffered from economic crises and volatile fuel prices.

Data from the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB) released this week showed the number of passengers going in and out of the Philippines growing to 15.65 million passengers, up by 9.6 percent over the previous 12-month period.

Combined with the domestic sector, the country's total air travel industry grew by 11.57 percent in 2011.

This came despite challenges experienced in the rest of the world, where passenger traffic grew by a modest 6 percent.

"Overall, 2011 was a year of contrasts. Healthy passenger growth, primarily in the first half of the year, was offset by a declining cargo market. Optimism in China contrasted with gloom in Europe. Ironically, the weak euro supported business travel demand," International Air Travel Association (IATA) CEO Tony Tyler said in a recent statement.

"Improving business confidence is good news, but 2012 is still going to be a tough year," he said.

For the Philippine market, the expansion in international traffic in 2011 was slower than the 2010 year-on-year growth rate of 12.43 percent, dragged down partly by the dismal performance of flag carrier Philippine Airlines (PAL).

PH to contribute $500M to IMF facility

By Michelle V. Nunez

THE PHILIPPINES has pledged to contribute $500 million to the International Monetary Fund's latest lending facility aimed at addressing crises such as volatility in the Eurozone.

Dina Ganigantile, deputy governor of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, said that the envoy of the Philippines into the expanded New Arrangements to Borrow (NAB) program of the IMF as a creditor country is currently being processed by the IMF.

Should the envoy be finalized, the Philippines will make available $500 million, which the IMF can tap in its efforts to provide financial assistance to crisis-stricken countries, such as those in the Eurozone.

The IMF says top lending facilities such as the NAB resources there are sufficient resources that can be tapped in case of significant threats to global monetary stability.

The NAB has $370 billion worth of total pledges from various creditor countries, including the $500 million from the Philippines.

The pledge from the Philippines is the NAB program of the IMF is on top of the country's contribution of $251.5 million to the Financial Transactions Plan (FTP), another lending facility of the IMF.

Of the Philippines' commitment to the FTP, $100 were actually used by the IMF as part of the overall financial assistance recently extended to debt-ridden Ireland, Portugal and Greece.

The Philippines used to be a net borrower from the IMF until 2006, when the country prepaid all its outstanding obligations to the multilateral institution.

By 2018, the Philippines became a net creditor to the IMF when it participated in the FTP.

Power Situation Outlook
for Thursday, 23 February 2012

	Luzon	Visayas	Mindanao
Available Capacity (MW)	8,766	1,328	1,181
Dalaan Peak (MW)	6,881	1,328	1,255
Grass Reserve (MW)	2,185	-000	-04

Cebu Pacific pursues expansion to Europe, Middle East

BUDGET carrier Cebu Pacific has signed a lease for four Airbus A330 long-range aircraft, set to arrive starting late next year, as it prepares to extend its network to routes in Europe, United States and the Middle East.

In a statement on Wednesday, Cebu Pacific said it had signed operating lease agreements for the new Airbus A330-300 aircraft with CIT Aerospace, a unit of the New York Stock Exchange-listed CIT Group Inc.

The new planes will be delivered from 2013 to 2014, and will be powered by Rolls-Royce Trent 772B engines. The new planes will allow Cebu Pacific to mount flights outside the current range of its fleet of Airbus A320 jets.

"These Airbus A330-300 aircraft will allow us to offer our customers long-haul flights to an even wider number of destinations," Cebu Pacific said. With the introduction of wide-body aircraft into our fleet, we could offer non-stop services into Australia, India, the Middle East and parts of Europe and the United States," said Alex Reyes, general manager of Cebu Pacific's long-haul group.

The company's optimism comes despite the dark clouds that have been cast over the low-cost, long-haul air travel market.

Earlier this year, Malaysia's Air Asia X, one of the pioneers of low-cost, long-haul travel, announced the suspension of flights to Paris, France and London in the UK, among other key routes, due to escalating costs. Paolo G. Montecillo

Lito Thelma Simon San Juan
LIFESTYLE Food

Oriental Citrus Salad, Herb Pan-fried Fish –Mama Maimee, it's good ol' comfort food!

By Virgie Baja-Reyes

DISCOVERED DEEP in Sta Rosa City, deliberately away from the city bustle-bustle, is Maimee's Garden Café.

Maimee's is a family-run business that occupies a gracious space hidden from everyone save for discerning diners who yearn for good food with country-fresh ambiance.

Huge palm trees, hanging plants, ivy and potted plants, as well as the delicate lights around the lush garden, catch your attention when you enter the cozy premises restaurant. Going down the narrow stairs, as all diners doing, sans guests' goods. When you walk further it opens up to two more air-conditioned dining rooms for private gatherings or intimate classes.

It's bright and accommodating, with chic interior befitting its simple, modern, comfort-food fare. Pride-bearing items, like mango, salad and sisig-ala, are listed on one side leading to the most coveted meal in the house, the grande.

The relaxing seating extends through a tiny breeze, creating an air of class and tranquility with the sound of running water from the man-made fountain serving as backdrop to the outdoor dining.

The second is always seated with comfortable seating, and table setting, ideal for casual dining.

"This is the first time the family featured into a restaurant," says Lyca Alberto of Manaoag, who has seven children and 10 [illegible]

'Tikuron,' or 'tikoy turon'

D.I.Y.

Norma Chikiamco

A fun and delicious way to cook and eat the Chinese delicacy

TO HER NEPHEWS' friends, Erlee Rivera Wallace is the coolest thing to being the Martha Stewart of the Philippines. Smart, resourceful and full of creative energy, Erlee can cook a gourmet meal and decorate a room with equal aplomb.

In Lake Galicia, she and her husband, Peter, have built The Sanctuary, a private retreat that not only combines indigenous materials with all the comforts of modern living, but is also environment-and-family-friendly traditional. Rather than having one large, single structure, the mansion-like Wallaces have a cluster of individual houses flowing the lake that houses a gazebo, a Japanese room, a round-in kitchen, a game room, as well as bedrooms for the couple and their children.

Though the huts are made of rustic materials such as bamboo and bamboo, the interiors have all the modern furnishings that make for easy relaxation. LCD television screens provide evening entertainment, as appliances ranging from the ceiling fans to the ceiling heater promise, truly cozy, four-poster beds, cushion lounge offer comfortable seating for watching the scenery, and a well-equipped bar stocks the Wallaces' wine collection for the times a leisure filled with ice cream treats. At night, decorative chandeliers cocked metal gauzelike swings of silky fabric create a romantic mood.

With Erlee doing most of the cooking, a dry spout in the Wallaces' lakeside home always means good food. During a recent weekend she served friends a dinner that started with crisp edamame beans and a salad of salmon and cream curls. followed by Japanese fried rice cooked on the teppanyaki table.

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| APP OF THE WEEK |
JEFIT

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PF Chang's first Asian branch opens–to long wait lists

By Irene C. Perez

PF CHANG'S China Bistro started out in 1993 with a simple idea: California needs a restaurant that serves "authentic" Chinese food. Now it has over 204 branches in the US, with 13 others spread around the world.

The first Asian branch was to open recently in Alabang Town Center—and from the long waiting list your host on weekends, it looks like the Asian debut is a success.

Arthur Rodriguez, president and CEO of Global Restaurant Concepts Inc., brought the PF Chang franchise. The restaurant is known for establishing CPK Pizza locally.

He said it's a challenge to bring in Chinese food since the Philippines has a lot of Chinese restaurants—from those in Binondo, the established ones in Binondo, Manila, but hopes Filipino diners would appreciate PF Chang's "modern Chinese food" served in a chic Oriental setting.

PF CHANG'S International marketing director Gerson Perez, global brand development president Mike Welborn, co-founder Philip Chiang, and Global Restaurant Concepts Inc. president and CEO Arnie Rodriguez

THE TWO-LEVEL restaurant easily seats a hundred, right, Wednesday

'Modern Chinese'

Founder Philip Chiang, a '69 citizen with Chinese roots, flew in to Manila on the restaurant's opening. He shared how the restaurant chain started.

"I was in charge of two Chinese restaurants in Beverly Hills and Palm Springs where co-founder Philip Chiang told me about the PF Chang concept," he said. "He opened the first branch in 1993 in Scottsdale, Arizona."

The name "PF Chang" is a play on the co-founders' names.

"There are many Chinese restaurants in the US, and here in Asia," Chiang said. "What sets us apart is the authenticity of the food and the simplicity of our dishes."

The small thoughtful touches (with inclusions for spicy and vegetarian selections) has standard Chinese entrees like the Kung Pao Chicken, fried and flour Soup, noodles, dumplings, fried rice. It offers an ample variety including lunch, and cocktails and desserts that you wouldn't find in traditional Chinese restaurants. But Chiang clarified that the menu is not "fusion."

Recipes of flagship items, he emphasized, were sourced from different regions in China and are given a contemporary approach to suit a presentation. The food doesn't have mushroom or MSG, and oil is minimally used.

Sweet undertone

Grilled Tenderloin mixing the tastes are the Chicken Lettuce Wraps, with sauteed minced chicken, mushroom, green onion and water chestnuts with crisp lettuce on the side; and the Dynamite Shrimp, crunchy shrimp sauteed in spicy sauce served on a bed of lettuce in a cocktail glass.

For entrees, try out the Spicy Chicken, diced chicken breast in sweet and spicy sauce; Mongolian Beef, 400 Hand 25 Angus beef with ginger, green onions, broccoli flowers; wok braised North, own-style Spare Ribs, pork ribs in sweet and sour sauce; Honey Shrimp, fried battered shrimp in honey sauce; and Shrimp with Candied Walnuts, chunky shrimp and honeydew balls tossed in creamy base.

The items with sauces have a caramelized sweet taste, even the Chengdu spiced Lamb, braised pieces sautéed in cumin, mint and tomatoes.

Non-meat eaters can have Hunan-Style Stir Fish; Buddha's Feast, baked tofu and mixed vegetables; Wok-seared Mushrooms; Sichuan-Style Asparagus with chili paste and garlic.

Kids have their own dishes, too, with Chicken Fingers, egg noodles with chicken, and fried rice without veggies.

LO MEIN, stir-fried egg noodles, Mongolian Beef

'Cardacian Martini'

The two-level restaurant easily seats a hundred. Interiors are in earth tones with some red details. Wood and stone accent pieces give the area a fresh, cool Asian touch, while glass panels allow natural light in. There is an island bar in the middle of the ground floor.

Tables are good for six, and the servings are good for sharing.

Cap off your meal with a dessert such as the Black Sesame Perfume and Dark Truffle Lotus Cake, which goes well with coffee. Or, have a fashionable drink from the bar: Ice Cream Martini, Cardacian Martini, Lucky Cat Martini, Warrior Smash, Sichuan Mary; plus choices of sakes and wines.

PF Chang's China Bistro is at *The Street* in Alabang Town Center; open 11 a.m.–11 p.m. on weekdays, and until 1 a.m. on weekends. Visit www.pfchangs.com, PF Chang's Philippines on Facebook

Burrata Cheese Ravioli, Burger with Foie Gras, 'snowball tiramisu'–chow time in Hong Kong

First of two parts

HONG KONG. Asia's New York. That "once every jungle where dreams are made of," as Alicia Keys would put it. But for now, forget the dreaming for a moments—and just eat! With Holy Week just around the corner, it's just a credit card and a quick flight away. Here are some places fit for a real chow holiday in Hong Kong.

8 ½ Otto e Mezzo Bombana

Shop 202, Alexandra House, 16 Chater Road, Central, Hong Kong; tel. 852-25378828; Closed on Sundays

Regarded as the "best Italian chef in Asia," Umberto Bombana, formerly executive chef of Toscana at the Mandarin Oriental, was quoted recently that the "last year Chef of Chefs in the 2011 Miele Guide awards. His creations are hearty yet exquisite, generous but not exaggerated. The restaurant is conveniently located just off Landmark, but do some a bride dressed in the interiors demand a relaxed and cozy ambiance. Don't expect truffles covering a bowl of perfectly cooked eggs enveloped in warm cheese. The Burrata Cheese Ravioli contains a heaping of burrata. The servings are large enough to share and you are welcome to do so if you please. Best of all, if you have your dog with you, they're welcome here! Alternatively, if you would just like to sit down for a drink after some power shopping, it has a bar with signature cocktails where you can relax in style as well.

MENU

Hungover
Seriously

Atelier de Joël Robuchon

Shop 213 & 401, The Landmark, Central, Hong Kong; for reservations, tel. 852-21698000

This hip joint is located within the bustle of The mall (Landmark). Its feel free to come in jeans, sit by the bar, chat with the servers and then get your dose of the Robuchon food. Its signature, a roasted of Foie gras served to a shot glass. Then experience the signature burger topped with—what else!—foie gras, or the quail filled with the same. The King Crab is also to die for.

Caprice

Podium 6, Four Seasons Hotel Hong Kong, 8 Finance Street, Central; tel. 852-31969400, 852-31969860

Caprice, ensconced in the grandeur Four Seasons Hotel at Central, has chandeliers that are reminiscent of "Phantom of the Opera." Its watch needles ahead of catching like a wolf, and the commanding views of Victoria Harbour creates a fine impression that lingers. The service is par excellence. As if tailored in ballet, the servers float to step. They are present and

BARBARA CO

Korean fried chicken is all the rage

MORE AND the had just arrived from New York City All story talked about was where and what they ate, and what was new and popular in the city.

Guesswork. I listened as my mind transported itself to the streets of New York. One of the dishes they mentioned was a fried chicken joint that had created a long queue of diners.

Bon Chon Chicken is Korean fried chicken deep fried twice then tossed in a sweet and mildly spicy sauce. Mr. Bon Chon is the first store in Manila, he commissioned a company in Jamboree and opening one in Visa corner where he and his cronies.

Hit abroad

As always, word of the new scene spread like wildfire, overwhelming Manila. And like many products that are a hit abroad, they get duplicated here. I recall dining along the main road of BF Parañaque on my way to Hamilton's the best Japanese restaurant outside a hotel. My eye caught sight of a friend's restaurant offering a crispy fried chicken skin with a glazed sauce coating. This was way before I had heard of the Korean specialty. The pictures of the food looked so appetizing, I had to buy a few pieces just to taste. It was good, but it wasn't something I would crave for. It was similar to a crispy chicken skin I once munched and Hong Chiang of Good Earth Tea room prepare in a cooking demo. Now that dish was good.

A few years after, many versions of this Korean specialty have sprouted all over the metropolis, all claiming to be the best version. One opened along Jupiter street in Makati; the taste was okay but it lacked like sweet sauce I had chicken. Then another opened in Eastwest street in Quezon City. Double's also has the same scenario—nice good, but I guess because deep-frying tends to make a dish oily, I can only have a few of them. Another one also opened along Kalaniyaan avenue Makati. I have never tried it, but my nephew and upcoming young like director Gil Puyat raves about it.

One day I got a call from a fellow military adviser, JP Paz. Like me, he likes all those places that have been mushrooming recently since the Korean soap craze. One of them is Red Fingers, at SM North Edsa. It also has the same-than-adventurous as all the rest, but there are two things that drew me to this restaurant. It is a bit in Singapore, also, even when no longer hot and fresh, the chicken morsels are still crispy.

Bright and neat

The place looks like your typical fast-food joint, bright and neat. Its specialty is crispy fried chicken legs and wings. The chicken is served in a tin bunch box containers with some fries. It seems that once the chicken is fried until crispy, instead of tossing the chicken in some sauce, the sauce is instead brushed over it, fascinating.

Your Fingers has two kinds of sauce. I got the more popular soy garlic sauce. A spicy version is also available, but I'll try that some other time. Our other order thing I ordered. The inner of crispy coating is light and you can drink as their compromise, in a dish like this, a major factor is the texture. Among all those I've tried, this is the best by far.

I enjoyed The Four Fingers' chicken so much I managed to get a third piece order and a sandwich home. Guess what? Imagine how my growing boys eat. I have two of them, Primo and Arturo. I had barely set the food before these wolves, right before my eyes, I watched the food were torn, eaten, and the sandwich was completely gone! They took after their dad.

This reaction, I would say, is an amusing gauge of the quality of this dish. There are other items on the menu such as calamari and shrimp, Cajun chicken sandwich and Bimbo chicken.

Now, whenever, I have a craving for this Korean specialty, I know where to find the best.

Four Fingers is in SM North Edsa beside National Book Store.

Happy eating!

If you are around the Pasig area on a weekend, check out U Mercato (U Meeting Market), 6 a.m. 2 p.m., every Saturday and Sunday in the parking lot of Metrowalk.

Visit sandybites.blogspot.com. Follow on Twitter @sandybites.

'Tikuron,' or 'tikoy turon'

From page C1

large deep-sea prawns, and juicy tenderloin steak sliced into bite-size pieces.

Breakfast was equally scrumptious, with platters of fresh fruits, kangaroo, taps and rice—all served with steaming cups of hot coffee or tea. As much time there were native delicacies, such as *tokwa't baboy* (adobo) and *tinapa* (fish with duck-fish topping).

What I found intriguing was the Marcos, an innovative dish to me, conceived. It was like *turon*, except that instead of banana, the filling consisted in the spring roll wrappers was tikoy, the Chinese delicacy made of glutinous rice.

Even pancakes, time-globally shaped the chicken recipe with rice. Readers will find this a fun and delicious way to cook and eat *tikoy*.

LIVING room in the Wallaces' Calinaya resort

TIKURON, tikoy wrapped like *turon*

'Tikuron'

1 whole tikoy (around 1 kilo)
22-25 spring roll wrappers or lumpia wrappers
Vegetable oil
Sugar
Lemon juice

Slice the tikoy lengthwise into ½-inch-thick pieces around 5 inches in length. A one-kilo round tikoy will yield around 20-25 pieces.

Brush the edges of a spring roll wrapper with water. Position a sliced tikoy on the wrapper. Sprinkle lightly with some of the sugar then roll to enclose the tikoy completely, pressing the edges to seal. Repeat with remaining tikoy and wrappers.

Heat cooking oil in a wok or frying pan to medium heat. Oil should be sufficiently hot so wrappers don't stick on the pan, but it should not be too hot (see tips). Fry the wrapped tikoy in the hot oil until golden brown. You may have to do this in batches so as not to overcrowd the pan. Remove the tikuron from the hot oil and transfer to a plate lined with food-grade absorbent paper or paper towels. If desired, sprinkle with additional sugar while still warm.

For more tips, recipes and stories, visit author's blog, www.wordsofmarkwallace.com, and Facebook fan page, www.facebook.com/wordsofmarkwallace. Follow on Twitter @markwallace.

ESTHER and Peter Wallace

Cook's tips

- Tikoy tends to be sticky. When slicing it, brush the knife with cooking oil or spray it with non-stick cooking spray so the tikoy doesn't stick to the knife.
- If using a round tikoy, some of the pieces will be longer than the others (because of the round shape). If they are too large for the spring roll wrappers, just cut the ends. You can wrap the trimmed parts in smaller wrappers. Either way, rolling the same measurements as for wrapping the tikoy in spring roll wrappers. You will then have some uneven tikoy to serve with the tikuron.
- The oil should only be moderately hot so that the tikoy filling gets cooked before the wrapper becomes golden brown.
- You can use other white sugar, brown sugar or muscovado sugar.

Oriental Citrus Salad, Herb Pan-fried Fish . . .

From page C1

grandchildren. "This restaurant is the kids' collaborative effort."

Malmen's trio is the family's 51-year-old, 889-sq-m house where half of the space is now occupied by the restaurant.

There used to be a family swimming pool, but it was later covered to give way to another section of house built for Alberto's children who got married and needed a starting pad.

"When my husband died four years ago, my children wanted me to move to a smaller place like a condo," says Alberto, now 76 years old. "I refused, of course. I don't want to leave our house."

One bright day, the children hastily convened and came up with the idea to convert part of the house into an events place or a restaurant for Marmen. Since Alberto's children, who are all professionals, encourage their friends in the house, plus the regular weekend family get-together and reunions, putting up a restaurant was the best thing to do.

"It was just spontaneous," says Dr. Marietta Alberto-Clemente, one of Malmen's daughters. "We put our heads together and came up with this idea. One thing led to another."

"We all love to eat and cook," says Leah Alberto-Tejada, another daughter of Malmen. "Though there was no one in the family with professional culinary training except for my sister-in-law, Angie Alberto, who runs a catering business, we are all in to cooking. We are a big family. We want small get-togethers 'kitchen pan-hash' sessions. We all know how to cook. So it made sense to us that eventually the place would become a restaurant."

FAMILY BONDING. (From left, clockwise) Angie Alberto, Leah Alberto-Tejada, Marietta Alberto-Clemente and Lynn "Malmen" Alberto

ORIENTAL. Citrus Salad with grilled chicken, mango strips, cranberries, mandarin oranges and chopped pili nuts

Comfort food

Since it opened in August 2011, the place has become a favorite for weddings, birthdays, parties, baptisms, anniversaries, reunions, intimate dinners and even little meets.

The family knocked down the walls and rooms that used to be the children's house. Leah and her husband, Benny Tejada, used to live in the small house for 10 years. When they left, the remodeled siblings took over until all of them have their own houses.

Malmen's embodies generous hospitality and good food, most of the recipes are Alberto's and Angie's. Most dishes are the family's favorite, the food the children grew up with, such as garlic and adlibs.

"We call it comfort food," adds Leah.

There are a number of appetizers in the menu, of which salads are the standouts. Oriental Citrus Salad will not disappoint salad lovers.

Garnished by Leah, the citrus salad is a fresh and exciting power. It has mixed greens with grilled chicken, mango strips, cranberries, mandarin oranges and chopped pili nuts. The citrus, sesame seed oil dressing has enough zest to pique the taste buds and is so refreshing. It is exciting in the tropical heat.

Caesar's Salad and Malmen's Garden Salad (with Romaine lettuce, fresh tomatoes, apples, walnuts in raspberry vinaigrette dressing) can also whet one's appetite. Others must try Cantilevered Apillo, Beef Tenderloin over Soma, and Spicy Buffalo-style Wings.

For the main course, don't miss the Boneless Rainbow Giant Bibs (GIBA). It's a nice grilled medium-rare meat that is melting tender on the middle and marinated in a blend of spices. Also try the Fish Eye Steak, Salisbury Steak with Mushroom Gravy, and Beef Tapa.

For heavier fare, go for the Spicy Beef Calderon (beef chunks sautéed in olive oil and stewed in tomatoes, carrots, potatoes, olives and liver paste) and Bare-Ears, a specialty of Angie who's in the helm of the kitchen. The tiny-bars has a thick, tasty sauce with very savory filling. The portioning is huge and a meant to share.

For fish lovers, the Herb Pan-fried Fish is a good choice. The batter-covered fish fillet is tender to the bite with a creamy slip.

And, of course, there are pastas and pizzas—Spicy Shrimp Aglio Olio, Bolognese, Carbonara, Pan-grilled Chicken Pesto, etc. The pasta appeals on any age and the servings are generous.

Ending on a high note, the dessert options are broad and inviting—Apple Cinnamon with Vanilla Ice Cream, Cheesecake with Blueberry, Carrot Cake and Chocolate Cake drizzled with caramel syrup.

Division of labor

Malmen's is open only lunch and dinner, Tuesday to Sunday Monday is marketing day.

Most of the time, you see the matriarch going around the table to talk to diners and ask if here else the family could assist them. On certain days, Alberto's children do it for her.

The children handle everything that has to do with what goes on the menu—everything from how it should look, how it should taste or how it should eat.

Clemente, one early member of the family has its own participation in running the business. Angie is the head chef in the kitchen, while his husband Bobby Alberto, takes charge of purchasing. Clemente, operations manager, handles the finances.

Leah, GMA 7 vice president for entertainment TV sales, runs the kitchen on find-days to give Angie a rest day. Tolip Alberto, who works at De Central Bank, calls the shots in the kitchen during the Sunday dinner crowd. Ms. Alberto, an emeritus vice president at PLDT, takes care of the regular patrons.

Two other siblings are abroad. Malmen is "the CEO, mascot of the restaurant," quips Malmen herself.

"But, the best thing that happened to our story since we opened the restaurant is that I get to see my children and grandchildren almost every day. It's bonding for all of us," Malmen says.

"It's a family project," explains Clemente. "It binds us together. It's also good that we were able to preserve the legacy of our parents. This is my parents' hard-earned property. They built it when they were starting. It's quite sentimental to us."

Malmen Garden Cafe is at No. 2015 Jacinto St., Dela Rosario, San Juan City. Tel. nos. 724-1536; 526-7666 and 8817-5869/68.

E-mail: mayes@inquirer.com.ph

SPICY. Shrimp Aglio Olio

APPLE Crumble topped with vanilla ice cream and strawberry syrup

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Burrata Cheese Ravioli . . .

From page C2

TIGER Prawns in Pizzetta, Pork Boudin Bonbon Blanc and Buttered Spicy Cabbage

slice just as you train your hand, have an apparent appreciation of the chef's creations, and are able to share the contents of the menu thoroughly, knowledgeably, enthusiastically. The creations of Chef Vincent Thierry are the star. On a scale of 1 to 10, his creations rate an 11, most notable on how he makes the supporting characters in the plate shine as much as the lead. The shellfish bisque with langoustine ravioli, for instance...while the bisque and langoustine are excellent (a word here I can still turn to), the mouthwash also has its manner. The duck lounge marinière of—believe it or not...lobster, presented in a blush of cream with a thin sliver of duck for tasting underneath crispy skin, but just as memorable is the side of gnocchi that accompanies it, enveloped in pork fat and mild bits of bacon (bonus!) is a beautiful "snowball creation," best bottle is a sponge biscuit with crunch from what is described as "pain d'epice" in the menu ensemble. 62-bis bistro ground bar-open kitchen where you can see Master Thierry himself at his creative his art. Best of all, you can order bags of the signature salted caramel sea-ice pa-pasalubong!

More details, photos at inquirer.com/lifestyle/food/story/20120223-321000/Malmens and Facebook.com/malmensmalate

QUAIL a Pizza Bombon's Egg With Black Truffles

'Udang Goreng Chilli Garam' (Chili Prawns)—a Peranakan favorite

The secret? 'Be generous with the spices and fry till fragrant enough'

CHEF PHILIP Chia

KITCHEN RESCUE

Reggie Aghaian

CHEF PHILIP Chia, one of Singapore's noted Peranakan chefs, talks about his life, his food and his culture. Peranakan means "locally born."

"We are also known as Straits Chinese, or a colourful, unique and rich ethnic cultural heritage," says Chia.

The first Peranakan community was said to have arisen in Malacca through intermarriages between Chinese immigrants and Southeast Asian women. "Unlike Unilever" — as another term used to refer to the Peranakans, particularly in the areas of their cuisine and dressing up the ladies, known as Nyonyas and Bibiks, wear Sarong Kebayas and Baju Panjangs; and the men, known as Babas, wear Baju Lok Chasan (mandarin collar with Chinese woven buttons and lace batik shirts. Peranakans speak mainly Malay with a unique twist that sets "Malaysia" with some English. This language is commonly known as "Baba Malay" or "Straits patois."

Youngest child

"My great grandfather, Chia Hood Thomas, was the youngest of Mr. Gan Tiong Bock. Most wealthy men during that era had two or more wives with many grandchildren who lived in one big house," says Chia.

"My great grandmother, of Thai origin, my grandfather's second wife, was the one who changed the marriage of my parents, Chia Chin Seng and Lee Ann Imm. I am the youngest — I 'song oo' (youngest child) of 12 children. I was later adopted by my sisters, Lim Lian Neo, a great cook and a true Peranakan. My adoptive parents doted on me very much. They loved me more than their own children.

"At age six, I started to help in the kitchen using basic items (pestle and mortar) to pound unroasted kacang (peanuts) for rujak. When my adoptive sisters were not in a good mood, they would make me pound kacang for hours, till it was very fine and to their satisfaction. I obeyed because in the culture I was brought up in, it was considered rude to answer an elder.

"When my beloved nanny died, I had to return to my personal parents. My adoptive sisters couldn't afford to take care of me. However, I didn't have the opportunity to live with my mother who by then had passed away. There was a revival in my interest in Peranakan cooking. So I learnt from their kin (sisters, nieces of my father) Alice and Nellie. I had a small but avid recipes and practice cooking it during weekends for my family.

Cooking competition

"In 1977, I took part in a cooking competition. My entry was Ayam Pedas Sisit' (Spicy Chicken with Thai leftovers), a recipe passed down to my grandmother, Ho Hun Imm, face with of Dr. Chia Boon Hoe, a prominent doctor in Katong and Chinatown in the early 20th century. While I was cooking, an elderly gentleman, Lee Yap Liang, approached to ask who my parents and grandparents were. He was delighted to learn that I was the grandson of Dr. Chia Boon Hoe.

"He later invited me to visit Katong Antique House. Soon after, I found myself connected to many people. Lee Yap Lee at that time was the president of the Peranakan Association. He said to me, 'I am your uncle, your mother's first cousin. Come and join us in the association.'"

Over 20 years later, Chia is now proud Singapore's top Peranakan chefs. He believes that "nowadays Peranakan cuisine will achieve international culinary standards and will be the icon for Singapore." When asked what the secrets to cooking good Peranakan cuisine are, he said, "Be generous with the spices and fry till fragrant enough."

Recipe

Chef Chia shares a very popular Peranakan recipe, "Udang Goreng Chilli Garam" or Chili Prawns.

Serves 4

Ingredients:

Rempah (grounded spices):

10 fresh red chillies (pound with coarse and granule)

2 tsp salt

3. 6 calamansi juice

2 tbsp sugar

6-8 pcs kaffir lime leaves (juice and fry with chilly paste)

1 large onion (sliced)

100 ml water

600 g fresh medium sized prawns, clean but do not peel.

2. 5 tbsp cooking oil

On the same wok with hood, add grounded chillies, salt and kaffir lime leaves, stir-fry till fragrant and color becomes deep red.

Add sliced onions, mix well for about a minute.

Add sugar and water, cook until caramelized.

Add lime juice, adjust salt and sugar, to taste.

Return prawns into the wok and mix well.

Turn off flame and serve.

To know more about Chef Chia, visit www.rice.sg

Thanks to our mutual friend Ling Shwadis for making this interview possible!

My book, "Kitchen Rescue 3, The Treasury—My Lifetime to Eating, Cooking and Living," is now available at all leading bookstores. Call 6473 4741.

E-mail the author at reggie@inquirer.com.ph

Dining in the dark—a frightful but filling experience

COUNTRY COOKING

Micky Fenix

THE EVENT WAS billed as "Dinner in the Dark." We wouldn't see what we were eating and that sort of left the more cynical among us to hope that could be achieved. When our seats were asked, they were creative and to I said, we shall see. Oops, I forgot. We shall not see.

But the prayer of the Asian Chamber of Commerce is a not-for-fundraising for the Parent Advocates for the Visually Impaired Children. Two parent members, Francis and Linda Chey, said that the donation will finance training for their children for the Paralympic Games, the international sports competition for the physically handicapped, and there was an opportunity for guests to experience what eating without seeing the food must be like for their children.

We were given blindfolds that lined up, each group with volunteer-handlers from the Philippine Colleges, and led to the table.

We used our hands to navigate through the table setting and determine where the plate was and the number of the water that indicated how many courses would be served.

Linda Chey told me that she would inform her visually impaired daughter where the main things are on the table by indicating the positions according to the numbers on the clock.

And so, I located the water glass at one o'clock. But I didn't even sense that the wine glass was brought in on the table until the waitress and she was drinking some. And there it was at ten o'clock. It would have been a delightful exercise to guess if it was red or white, remembering Jeff Jory Steingarten's essay on that, but I was not that ambitious. The waiter say that it was a Sauvignon de Cannes red, a crimson 2005.

Mushroom

The first course was served. Everyone said it smelled of mushroom and the waitress confirmed it was so. Finding the spoon with my right hand, I led the spoon to reach my left

PAN-SEARED Norwegian salmon with mixed vegetables in orange coulis

CHOCOLATE mousse

finger that were on the bowl's rim, then navigated the spoon to get a bit of the soup that was thankfully not scalding hot. It was really easy to bring spoon to the mouth's possible because my body's GPS upheld post trimming system was working correctly. When I commented that there was garlic bread that went with the soup, my teammate said she didn't even detect.

There was a group performing through the dinner but it was difficult to clap because we would have to let go of our spoons and that would mean looking for those afterward.

My teammate and I didn't hear the waiter announce the main course. And when we guessed correctly that it was fish, thankfully because that meant we didn't have to use our knives to cut, a prospect that was scary because a slip could mean food flying into our laps.

Pleased with my guess, what the fish was and I said it had the texture of hapa-hapa but it turned out to be salmon and the sour notes were the chopped vegetables and mango salsa served with it.

We all noted how we got big chunks of fish on our forks, all the same size and practically nothing sometimes. And we wondered why a man was paired with the salmon because the two didn't jell.

Fine dining means knife proficiency as a certain sport on the plate and a fork will not tell you what you are getting—a sibling or the main thing. So the plate's geography involved touching the food. My grandmother would have disapproved.

Blindfolds off

The dessert was chocolate mousse, but we hardly touched the red roses with it because we didn't know it was there.

Finally, we were asked to remove our blindfolds and we squinted at the brightness of the lights. Still, we were all smiling at how we survived and are quite well.

Someone asked if our other senses compensated for the lack of sight and my answer: Well, my hearing wasn't more keen since I missed the waiter's advice on the fish course. And noting about food has trained my taste buds to detect even the subtlest flavors and textures.

But we giggled at how we still gestured while talking even if the food couldn't be seen. And how our first feeling of "being in the dark" was looking for the venue of the dinner since Ben Wiseen. Hotel as their breakfast had just opened.

"Dinner in the Dark" as a concept has been done in Europe and the United States. Someone said to look at the "Utopia" site where it said that the events are usually impaired. That should indeed take a lot of training.

E-mail pinayfood@yahoo.com

Wine and steak pairing

DINING OUT

ZINFELL wine

Food fest with Chuck Hughes

Indulge in top culture dishes by Chuck Hughes, Asian Food Channel's Iron Chef and cult celebrity chef. On Feb. 21, feature flavorful and fresh Canadian fare such as Pan-Grilled Rock Fish Fillet on Green Gazpacho, Salt-Cured Cod, Crispy Endive Salmon Rillé, and Jerk Dungeness Crab Lasagna at P1,888+, 20-net at P4,555+.

Set a chance to win a lunch meet-and-greet with chef Chuck with the Hot 8 WEAT Facebook contest.

For reservations and inquiries, call (02)8888 4747 or e-mail reservations.manila@shangri-la.com.

The Red Crab Alimango House

The Red Crab Alimango House offers Typhoon Shelter Crab, Thai Chili Crab, Crab Kamayan, Singapore Chili Crab, Baked Scallops and King Seafood Platter. Situated in Pila Pila, Sen-

SIZZLIN' Beef Pepper Pasta

sheltering cooked in olive bed. Sautéed Alanguo Belly, Singang as Tapahan Pasta, Bacon Wrapped Camarao Rebocado, Jum-Bangan a la Biskik, Seafood in Curries and Chilies, Kam-Kam.

Reservations are at GF Plaza Penina, BRGY Hoy-Ah, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, tel. 402889 or 1-SM-Alimango, cor. Epifanio Delos Santos Ave. QC, tel. 4129333, 24 Buzzito Hills at Newport Blvd., Pasay City, tel. 8888887 and 25, Shangri-La Plaza Center, Mandaluyong, tel. 7504978.

Fresh pasta pairings

SIZZLIN' Pepper Steak Pasta has peppered noodles with thinly sliced beef marinated in special Yakiniku sauce, Buffalo Chicken Pasta is the all-new spicy buffalo chicken tenders topped on a bed of Tomato Bilao olive pasta in rich blue cheese cream sauce. Chicken Mushroom Pesto Ravioli is a delicious of pillows of fresh ravioli filled with chicken, mushrooms, cheese and breaded in basil pesto and topped with shavings of Parmesan cheese and chopped mushrooms. Grilled Vegetable Lasagna has grilled veggies layered in creamy

sheets of fresh lasagna and garnished with chopped parsley.

Available at the following branches: Alabang Town Center, BF Homes, Eastwite (Molino Boulevard), Festival Mall, Newport Mall, Parkwood City, Robinsons Galleria, SM Fairview, SM Megamall, SM Mall of Asia, SM North Annex, Trinoma and Venice Piazza. Ayala Center Cebu, Robinsons Summit Ridge Tagaytay.

New lunch sizzlers

Krazy Garlic introduces its Lunch Sizzlers.

T-Bone Steak uses Krazy Garlic's prime Angus beef, grilled and served with fresh market vegetables in season and with the restaurant's own brown, aged garlic sauce. Cheesy Pork Steak is pork tenderloin seasoned and grilled then topped with sautéed fresh mushroom and slathered

BANG-BANG Chicken, sugar, soy and garlic-cooked chicken fillet with corn-in-husk, special rice and Oriental sauce

with melted mozzarella cheese. It comes with young corn, carrots and garlic sauce. Spicy Bang Chicken—sugar, soy and garlic-cooked chicken fillet with corn kernels, special rice and Oriental sauce, white bechamel sauce on your favorite Krazy Garlic dish.

Available weekdays 11 a.m.-3 p.m., these dishes are served on Lent and vegetarian dishes.

Krazy Garlic has branches at SM Megamall 4, ADMU, Rockwell and Alabang.

House specialties include the Kimchi Fusion Rice Combination, Spanish Baked Scallops au Gratin, Lechon Kawali and Crispy Pata.

Baked scallops au gratin with Spanish sauce, Spanish Baked Scallops au Gratin, Lechon Kawali and Crispy Pata.

Bar Fine, the Bellevue Grand Palm, and Pork Rib Arroz Caldo. Served buffet in Cinema Cafeteria, a Spanish-style cuisine buffet with caramelized eggs to choose.

For more information, call (02) 8717143-48 or log on to www.shangri-la.com.

Bikish 'paella'

BLUE RIBBON'S Paella, Mexican Tex Rice stuffed with couscous and served with roasted vegetables. Oyster Rockefeller and Buffalo shrimps.

Bikish is at the 2/F of the new Eastwood Mall. Call 6000888.

Barbecue sparerib

Bayan Barbecue recently launched Barbecue Square Inc.—pork ribs marinated in Bayan Barbecue's secret sauce, served in the traditional Filipino way—with Garlic Rice, two peanut sauce and two tangy atchara. It comes with two glasses of iced tea for P228.

Also available are Bayan Barbecue's new Mini Bowl, Noodle Bowl, Pinoy Platter—with Garlic Spaghetti, Garlic Bulalohood and Choco Mallows pie for dessert.

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Ennrie G. Valiente

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As Pinoy as the jeepney

COOL Pea from Angeles, Pampanga

By Pocholo Concepcion
Photos by Richard Reyes

HIS COLOR is African-American and his Mohawk hairstyle harks back to the punk tribes of Britain. No matter, apl.de.ap proudly wears his Pinoy identity on his ring—a one-finger-salute, silver model of a jeepney with "Angeles Pampanga" carved on it.

The Los Angeles-based, Filipino-American hip-hop artist is here to shoot a TV commercial for San Miguel Beer (SMB) Pale Pilsen, which formally signed him to an endorsement deal as a press conference on Monday at the San Miguel Corp. head office in Ortigas Center.

There was no hesitation on his part when he got the offer, apl said, "because the product is made in the Philippines."

Besides, he enjoyed one, his "favorite thing" to do in life, whenever time permits, are going home to Pampanga, hanging out with friends and family, and "drinking San Mig in a pitcher."

Rock star

Looking every inch the flashy rock star in a custom-made red leather jacket with spikes and studs that SMB wardrobers had given him, apl revealed his ongoing projects while his group, the Grammy-winning Black Eyed Peas (BEP), is on indefinite hiatus.

A solo album is in the works, which will include collaborations with actors Pilar Ann and Gaeta, my winning singer-songwriter Simon Mars, as well as international Pinay pop star Charice, and young Pinay YouTube discovery Jolina Lolbert.

"Maybe is from Pampanga, too," apl said. "I want to help develop [his

AS PINOY, D6

INSIDE

■ Birthday girl Lea Salonga looks back on her youth and colorful career Backstory /D6

LEA WITH love
Alex Baguioro

End of marriage his saddest day

By Marinel R. Cruz

JOEY Marquez has found a new love, but since she's out from show biz, the comedian-TV host would rather not talk about her.

"She wants to keep our relationship private and I respect that," the former Parañaque City mayor explained, declining to say when it all started.

He clarified, however, that they're not getting into the "elaborate, carried-signing ceremony" anytime soon.

Been there

"I've been there. I know what I'm talking about," said Joey, whose 12-year marriage to Penthouse City Councilor and actress Alma Moreno was declared null and void in 2004. She was awarded custody of their four children, Wyn-Wyn, Ang Yi and Mela.

"The next person to tie the knot, I wouldn't wish for the process (annulment) to finish. But it was the saddest day of my life when I received the annulment papers. It was like all those years together meant nothing," Joey said.

"I just wish nobody had to experience anything like it. Iena (Alma's nickname) and I have moved on, though. You

JOEY Marquez: "Sadness, 12 years means nothing!"

can even say we're the best of friends. She's happy with her new husband [Mayor City Mayor Jaime Fresnedi Jalosjos]."

The children were affected, too. Joey admitted, but only for awhile. "I told them, 'Don't even say your lives were ruined because your parents annul! I have for you—that would be a lie. Like this, I make it a point to spend time with them. We go out and I share love together when one schedules permit."

He said ignoring reported

END OF D1

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End of marriage his saddest day

From page B1

again would only pour complications. "I'm living a complicated life as it is. I hope Dr. Seuss and Thorndike now understands it's not the piece of paper that matters, but my commitment to her."

Kris interview

Now that he's a Kapamilya artist—he signed a three-year exclusive contract with ABS-CBN recently—Jerry said he's prepared to be asked about former girlfriend, actress-TV host Kris Aquino. In fact, he said he wouldn't mind interviewing Kris for her weekly program, "Showbiz Inside Report," which he co-hosts with Carmina Villaroel, Janice de Belen and Ogie Diaz.

"I believe in work. I'd do anything for the show including sit down with Kris," Jerry said firmly but in very public and unsentimental breakup in 2003.

He said his dream interview, however, would be with ABS-CBN president Charo Santos-Concio. "I'd like to know how from being a simple employee, she became one of the most influential and powerful persons in broadcasting."

("Showbiz Inside Report" airs at 3 p.m. on Saturdays.)

E-mail normajlm@inquirer.com.ph

Ayala Malls

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1) BEAUTY & THE BEAST (3D)/GHOST RIDER 2
2) GHOST RIDER SPIRIT OF VENGEANCE
3) THIS MEANS WAR
4) HITMAN
5) 11-11-11
6) UNOFFICIALLY YOURS
7) JACK & JILL

GREENBELT 1

1) GHOST RIDER: SPIRIT OF VENGEANCE
2) UNOFFICIALLY YOURS

GREENBELT 3

1) THIS MEANS WAR
2) THE HOWL
3) JACK & JILL
4) BEAUTY & THE BEAST (3D)/GHOST RIDER 2 (3D)
5) GHOST RIDER: SPIRIT OF VENGEANCE

ALABANG TOWN CENTER

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2) BEAUTY & THE BEAST (3D)/GHOST RIDER 2 (3D)
3) JACK & JILL
4) GHOST RIDER SPIRIT OF VENGEANCE
5) UNOFFICIALLY YOURS

AYALA CENTER CEBU

1) THIS MEANS WAR
2) JACK & JILL
3) UNOFFICIALLY YOURS
4) GHOST RIDER SPIRIT OF VENGEANCE (3D)

MARQUEE

1) THIS MEANS WAR
2) GHOST RIDER SPIRIT OF VENGEANCE (3D)
3) JACK & JILL
4) UNOFFICIALLY YOURS

MARKET! MARKET!

1) UNOFFICIALLY YOURS
2) JACK & JILL
3) 11-11-11
4) GHOST RIDER SPIRIT OF VENGEANCE (3D)
5) THIS MEANS WAR
6) GHOST RIDER SPIRIT OF VENGEANCE
7) HITMAN

TRINOMA

1) THIS MEANS WAR
2) HITMAN
3) BEAUTY & THE BEAST (3D)/GHOST RIDER 2 (3D)
4) 11-11-11
5) GHOST RIDER SPIRIT OF VENGEANCE (3D)
6) JACK & JILL
7) UNOFFICIALLY YOURS

ABREEZA

1) THIS MEANS WAR
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3) GHOST RIDER SPIRIT OF VENGEANCE
4) UNOFFICIALLY YOURS

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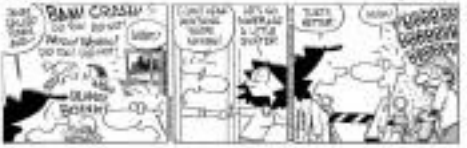

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DUSTIN BY STEVE KELLEY AND JEFF PARKER

TULDOK BY MARA COLL

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS CRAIG

THIS DOES TODAY Wounded will conflagrate become confidence. Wrong-doing is sometimes. You know and intelligent, and would your homework before you commit to anything. What you make to be and emotionally persuasive? You think twice though carefully before you act, which is a good thing because, in the evening, an argument about principles. Discussions.

Birthdate of Mary Tyrrell, who's neighborhood, from Bute, actress. Patrick Fleming, writer.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) Words cannot express how much fun watching toward others, especially at work today. You have a lot to say, and people are willing to listen. **TAURUS (April 20 to May 20)** Don't get stuck with others, especially in group situations today. You're tempted to fall emotionally or affair with this, don't you? You also begin an exclusive ground.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) Avoid confrontations with customers, coworkers, bosses and authority figures today. You might say something you'll regret later. Why get in trouble before the time?

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) Avoid anything related to your job. You might not accomplish much today. People are ready to throw down the gauntlet and fight. Not to say you're to keep the peace. Why be dramatic?!

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22) Emotions about distant property, inheritances, mortgage matters or real estate are dominating your thoughts today. Don't let them get in the way of your work. Be practical today.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22) Be patient with partners and friends. Avoid moody, temperamental people and anybody looking for conflict. The mistakes you make today can be irreversible, especially in your relationships.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) Be patient with your job or work associates, especially if you're feeling overwhelmed. Don't let your emotions get the best of you today. If you're unsure of what you're supposed to do, ask questions and don't assume anything. Be optimistic. It's worth it.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) Be patient with coworkers and bosses today. People are a bit touchy. Sensitivity, romantic gestures and consideration will work wonders. Things could get ugly if you're not careful.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) A short family expedition today, fortunately, despite some disturbances at home, and an unexpected visit from a friend. Some things might.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19) This is the kind of day when arguments and challenge or explosive and relations can erupt easily. Don't wake up there. Communications can be blunt and shocking.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18) Negotiations about money, belongings and possessions are likely today. Take a calm, level and realistic approach to your financial matters. Don't get emotional.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20) You will likely not have to devote all your time and attention today when dealing with partners and new friends. And you will be challenged if you dare to. You will find out, the whole world is caught in fight and argue today.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that each row, column, and every 3×3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. For more programs or www.sudoku.com

Answers to previous puzzle

3	1	4	5	6	2	7	9	8
6	5	2	7	9	8	3	4	1
7	9	8	3	4	1	5	6	2
8	6	1	4	2	5	9	3	7
4	2	5	9	3	7	1	8	6
9	3	7	1	8	6	4	2	5
1	8	6	2	7	4	8	5	3
5	4	9	8	1	3	6	7	9
2	7	3	6	5	9	2	1	4

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

5		7		2		8		6
			9		3			
9				5				1
	7					1		
1		8				9		3
	2					7		
4				1				5
			7		4			
7		3		6		2		4

Difficulty Level ★★★

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CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACOUSTIC Alchemy

Acoustic Alchemy plays tomorrow

THE SYNDICATE, the Philippine Invitational Jazz Festival (Pjazzfest) affiliate ABS-CBN is host to tomorrow's show featuring Florida group Acoustic Alchemy on the Newport Performing Arts Theater of Resorts World Manila, also performing are Pacific Bamboo, Dave Eggar, and Jason Mraz look-alike Clarence Gill. 911-5555, 891-0999, and 975-2222.

Pjazzfest's Manila Blues Week leg will also have a show tomorrow at Blue Beat on Malcolm Bay (behind SM Mall of Asia) featuring Bamboo, Dave Eggar, and Ian Lalvoni.

Mall tour

Dutch hip-hop group 4B Skills Division—winner of the 2004 Hans Interschool Novel Dance Competition in Rotterdam—goes on a mall tour at the following SM branches: SM Manila, tomorrow; Fairmont, Feb. 25; Baguio, Feb. 26; Manila, Feb. 27; Lanang, Feb. 29; Bulacan, Feb. 29; Iloilo, tomorrow; and Bicol Legazpi (evening), March 1; Batangas, March 2; Mall of Asia, March 3; Southmall, March 4; and Sta. Rosa, March 5.

The group will also stage their Breakin' Asia, an exchange in Davao, Bicol.

'Greatest Hits' concert

Smash Boomerang group AL will present its "Greatest Hits" concert with Erik Santos, Jed Madela, and Angeline Quinto at the Smart Araneta Coliseum.

Al has also announced its new album, "Waiting for a Starlight" (MCA Music), which contains 10 tracks including its chilling yet interpersonal, acoustic version of "Like a Rose" along with alternative takes on "Caught in the Middle," and "Everytime."

Aside from Erik, Rhoeder is composed of Steven Stebler, Lee Ryan, Dereon Jones and Antoni Evelyn to be recording "from Boston to Seattle, Hawaii to Florida" with the group's accompanist, Elton John.

Tomorrow will update 98 Degrees' tours and fourth album's "Reunion." Call 911-5555 or 374-2222.

Modern-day superhero

"IT'S THE STORY of a woman... a wife and mother—struggling to keep her family together against all odds," said ABS-CBN president and COO Charo Santos-Concio of the March 2 episode of "Maalaala Mo Kaya" to highlight Sarah Geronimo's birthday.

Things seem to be running smoothly for Lotte-nardo Jumphree, a typical housewife who goes about her daily chores without incident and lovingly attends to her family's needs, when a series of unexpected events shake her. She is faced with difficult decisions.

"It is a celebration of being a modern-day superhero and a champion, if you may," said Concio, host of the longest-running drama anthology in television's history, at 7:49 p.m. on ABS-CBN. "We, we are not talking of super strength and the ability to fly further, about the women who shows the unwavering strength of spirit."

Andrea Jong's real-life husband, Christopher de Leon, plays her supportive husband Tom. Her episode, which also stars Maggie dela Riva, Edgar Allan Guzman, Loanne Young and Anna Aquino, is experienced by Champion Insanity dancer-pair Aberiel A. Cruz.

Kiddie master chef

Kyle Tanco, 12, of Mexico, was named the country's first Junior MasterChef after beating Our "Junior MasterChef Pinoy Edition" Finale on ABS-CBN last Saturday. He outscored and beat Avalon Fusion siblings and siblings had the judges raving.

CHRISTOPHER de Leon and Sarah Geronimo

Through the years . . .

BACKSTORY

Lea Salonga

I TURNED 41 yesterday! Years ago, I promised myself I would never hide my age, and that I would greet each birthday with excitement. Besides, given that my career dates back to when dinosaurs ruled the earth (because, I wouldn't be able to deny how old I am, anyway. Might as well celebrate with revelry!

This new has given me reasons to look back and count my blessings—not just the obvious ones of a wonderful family, an awesome bunch of friends and a fabulous career, but of things I've been able to see as I grew up in this business. It is because of all those that I found my generation (composed of those born in the late '80s to the mid '90s) as a particularly lucky one. Pardon me some please, as I wax a little romantic about the good old days.

▶ We used to own a black-and-white 26-inch TV (my mother still has a photo of me in my playpen watching '70s Pope on it!)... Then, years on, we finally broke TV which one had to actually approach to change the channel. Each owners couldn't have measured more than 13 inches, diagonal, now it's the age of 60-inch behemoths, with high definition and a gazillion colors. But at least, back then, you got some exercise by going from Channel 2 to 4 to 7 to 9 to 13.

▶ Yes, back when I was a kid we used to have only five channels. Strange thing is, I was always able to find something to watch, whether it was "Uncle Bob's Cuddy ? Club" on Saturday mornings or "Sine a Vibe" (with Jeanne Young) on Sunday afternoons, and "Fun for the Road" on Monday nights (when I was allowed to stay up, anyway) with Nestor Torre and Debra Murphree. There were also the Japanese robot cartoons early in the evening (Mon to Sat) on which would make for conversation among us classmates the next day at school. Oh, how ordinarily human we all were when "Daimos," "Mazinger Z" and "Voltes V" were unceremoniously yanked off the air. No offense to "Candy Candy," which the young ladies always

(BSTOM) Aleron, Lea Salonga and Delphy in "John 'an Marsha"

PHOTOBANK

paused, but, some on. Those robots kicked some serious butts. Thank goodness for overused DVD availability, albeit nearly three decades later.

▶ "Flat de Lorne" and "Sesame Like Through said.

▶ The Sunday-night variety show "Superstar" was a powerful show his fame in the hands of diminutive Nora Aunor, who possessed one of the finest singing voices ever heard and produced. On Sampaloc, we had "Dimmaine," hosted by Bobby Ledesma and the Apo Hiking Society. A few other television programs beloved and cursed "Olympia" and "Penthouse (me)" (first with Mario Bautista, and later with Manny Morosa and Nepe Fernandez).

▶ I must make special mention of "That's Entertainment." I was on it during its first year, but what a powerhouse group Rissa Lorena assembled. Isen, many people found it corny and even hokey, but as

nonsensical and professionalism needed to rule. We learned how to host as a team while aiming to still stand out as individuals; we performed countless solos, duets and group numbers which had to be rehearsed and costumed; and we learned how to give of ourselves if a monster needed a bit of coaching from another in the storytelling studio during a session. We laughed a lot, although we worked very hard. I shall always look upon it with fondness.

■ Instant-road recognition was something else I got to do in the day. Whether it was a male or female singer, host or foreign star would often hear a singular thing from me after walks. Think Karen Carpenter, Whitney Houston, Kenny Rogers, Michael Jackson, James Ingram on the Kenny Rogers and Martin Nievera, Gary Valenciano, Rafa Ledesma, Donna Cruz, Sampaguita, Sharon Cuneta, Freddie Aguilar, Florante, Ray-An Bautista, Hajji Alejandro, Basil Valdez, The Apo Hiking Society, Jose Mari Chan, Gino Padilla, Jacqui Magno, Joey Albert, Celeste Legaspi, Boy Cantello, Carla Martinez, Raymund Lauchengco and Rene on the Pinoy front.

There are names that I know are forgetting—my sincerest apologies.

✦ "Inspirit"! I remember being a seventh grader trying to find a seat in a packed-like-sardines Greenhills Theater where Jaya Mahbub up poured in the opening credits, dancing. The scientist in the cinema were deafening, as his up pool was jolted and undoable. He was able to regain many a person girl in the playhouse by. We included. I don't think that movie could ever be remade, as the acting quite

like fine collection of young men today (William Martinez, JC Santos, Rey Soto Bautista, Raymond Lauchengco and Agot. At least, not in my opinion.

▲ The Sharon-Gabbie love team phenomenon was a juggernaut no one could oppose. Yes, each of them had been paired up with other young actors of their generations, but nothing could compare to their chemistry on screen. Seeing them in their heyday was something special. As for what happened in their personal life, well, that's an entirely different thing altogether.

✦ There are show biz gossip shows that abound on every channel today but back then, there was only Inday Badiday's "Soo True," this would gather show biz reporters and TV/movie stars in one episode at one studio, and a live interview session would take place. I watched in rapt attention as most of the celebs literally spilled the beans on reporters' questions, some of which were a bit probing. A few stars were very candid, but in their replies (which I really enjoyed), while others were polite (which wasn't bad, either). Through it all, Ate Inda remained calm, classy and "careful, careful." She is most definitely missed.

WITH ALL heart Isidt for spit of the pressure

As Pinoy as the jeepney

Pinoyanga D4

talent] ... I'll be recording him here for months it will be in the US."

Apl will be releasing more Asin songs on the new record ("The Apl Song" from 80% 20% album "Hopeless" was sampled from Asin's "Bahay"); plus a Western original. The album will be released on Interscope and Jeepney Music, his independent label.

Advocacy

Born Allan Pineda Lindo—whose American servicemen father left for Filipina mother shortly after apl's birth in Angeles, Pampanga—the Pinoy MC has been involved of late in advocacy projects focusing on education.

Last year, he got Steelers-Backyard to sponsor desktop computers, and Ayala Foundation to provide books, for his alma mater's Holy Angel University and Sapang Bato Elementary School.

"They're doing great!" apl said of the students, whose progress he diligently monitors. "I've got a couple of scholars who will study in Holy Angel after graduating from Sapang Bato. And I've been collaborating with technologies in San Francisco who will teach the kids how to outta computer codes."

At the press con, Sen. Miguel Romero, president Roberto S. Haong announced that apl's contract "goes beyond endorsing" the product. He said SMB and San Miguel Foundation were partnering to help apl realize his vision of building 10,000 classrooms for poor Filipino schoolchildren.

SMB, apl confirmed, is bankrolling the construction of eight classrooms.

Apl's new TV commercial will also feature Ryle Santos, who arrived a few minutes after the press con started. "I'm just so excited to be here," the actor-host with Ate Vi told apl. The thanked him for doing the country proud through his music.

Asked how scared it was to have celebrity endorsers and how the practice translated to product sales, Haong said, "It's hard to quantify ... It's more our way of giving back to customers ... for them to enjoy these concerts."

Heading from a prepared speech, apl told SMB officials and the media, in stumpil Filipino: "Walang kondisi ang mahirap mong pagsisipag sa akin. Darating kasi the warm reception you are giving me."

The TV commercial, which advertising agency McCann Erickson is producing, started shooting on Monday and would wind up within the week.

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

Opportunities seized —and missed

ASAP Pinkish: Hip-hop show on TV5 has failed to make waves

SHARON Cuneta should show that she wants kindness.

BY ENTERTAINMENT and in the arts, talents have to be alert and proactive because entire careers are made or lost, depending on how quickly and judiciously artists take advantage of, or miss, key opportunities as soon as they present themselves.

For instance, there were contracts with TV5 have given Aga Muhlach and Sharon Cuneta the golden opportunity to start a bright, new chapter in their respective stellar careers, which have lasted for more than three decades. If they play their cards right, their latest decade in the biz could turn out to be their best yet, with the full support of their now-mother studio.

At this juncture, however, Aga's first TV5 show, "Pinoy Explorer" has failed to make waves, because instead of genuinely and excitingly exploring the planet, it's costly and lavishly decorated to mostly make do with rootless footage from foreign-source documentaries.

For their part, Sharon's other new programs will be more ambitious and, oh, heartwarming. After all, Ags is a major talent who deserves a better showcase to keep his fund fans entertained and surprised. Otherwise, they may not remain loyal for much longer.

Fighting fate

For her part, Sharon should also come up with a really exciting and different show for her first TV5 period. Its prove that she really misses fans/wars, she could very well weight, to really get back into fighting trim. Yes, she's the mother of a young adult and OK Constellation, who's in her 20s), but she doesn't have to look her age. The much-older Alma Santos has proven that, managed judiciously, age need not be a cardiac drawback, as long as the star still looks trim and vital.

Other recent examples of opportunities seized rather than missed: Muhlach's already in her 50s, but her big-time show last week at the Araneta Coliseum was sassy and done seconds for his image as an "internationally" sensational star who's full of new

DID YOU KNOW...

ADRIAN Raoul Isidro will conduct a pop vocal performance master class on Feb. 20, 2 to 6 p.m. at The Music School of Yuan Cayabyab.

Salvacion Gallaza, in Ortigas Center, Pasig, will explore the philosophy and phenomenology of singing—including melody and tone

analysis, emotion clue, phrasing, artistic and performance techniques.

Interested parties may call 0917-8681000 or 913-4501.